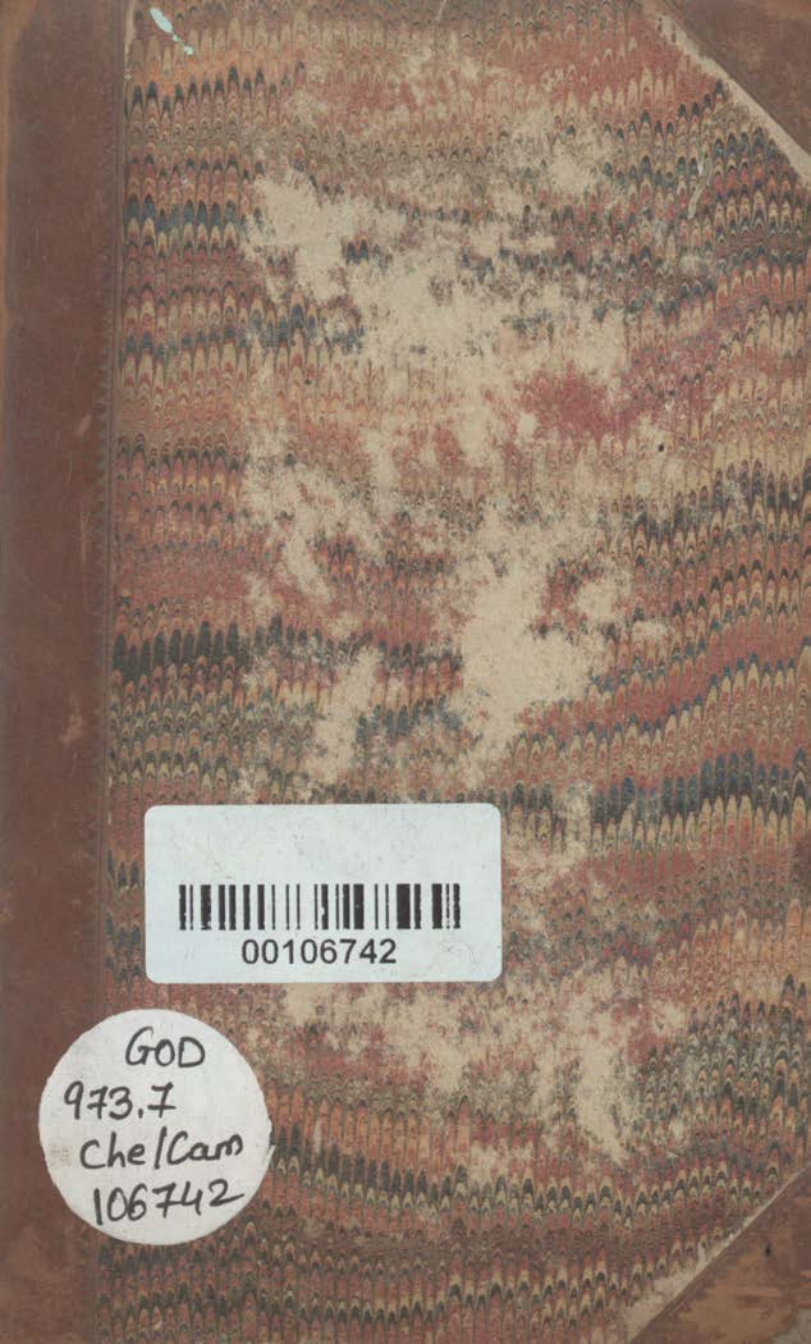

00106742

GOD
973.7
Chel Cam
106742

00106742

Digitized with financial assistance from
Shri Brihad Bhartiya Samaj
on 31 October, 2019

CAMPAIGNS

IN

VIRGINIA, MARYLAND,

ETC. ETC.

CAMPAIGNS

IN

VIRGINIA, MARYLAND,

ETC. ETC.

106742

BY

CAPT. C. C. CHESNEY, R.E.,

PROFESSOR OF MILITARY HISTORY, STAFF COLLEGE.

VOLUME THE SECOND.

(CONTINUING THE HISTORY TO THE END OF THE THIRD YEAR OF THE WAR)

973.7

WITH MAPS.

LONDON:

SMITH, ELDER AND CO., 65, CORNHILL.

1865.

[*The right of Translation is reserved.*]

CONTENTS.

CHAP.		PAGE
	PREFACE	vii
I.	LEE'S INVASION OF PENNSYLVANIA (1863)	1
II.	GETTYSBURG.—THE FIRST AND SECOND DAYS	40
III.	GETTYSBURG.—THE CLOSING DAY	80
IV.	LEE'S RETREAT TO THE RAPIDAN	109
V.	LONGSTREET AT CHATTANOOGA	149
VI.	THE CAMPAIGN OF KNOXVILLE	182
VII.	LEE AND MEADE IN EAST VIRGINIA	196
VIII.	SPRING OPERATIONS.—DAHLGREN'S RAID	212

PREFACE TO THE SECOND VOLUME.

THE Author's former work having been received by both press and public with a kindness which far exceeded his utmost hopes, he has been induced to republish it in a more complete form, and to continue the history in the present volume. As before, the thread followed is that of the events connected with the defence of Richmond; and the western operations have been noticed only where they directly concern the armies so long opposed in Virginia.

A portion of the matter was prepared for publication in a periodical: but this has been revised throughout; and the latter part is either wholly rewritten, or entirely new.

This volume has been purposely closed at the definite period which separates the campaigns now taking place from those preceding, in order that

nothing might be written without such full information from both sides being obtained, as might justify the author's trust that it will be found to be—if nothing else—a clear and impartial narrative.

The author has been charged by more than one critic with a leaning to the Confederate cause. To such he can only reply that his honest endeavour has been to give fairly from all available sources the course of military events, and to exclude politics wholly from his history, save where they have had a positive influence in the operations in the field.

STAFF COLLEGE, SANDHURST,
22*nd November*, 1864.

CAMPAIGNS

IN

VIRGINIA, MARYLAND,

ETC. ETC.

VOLUME II.

CHAPTER I.

LEE'S INVASION OF PENNSYLVANIA (1863).

THE previous failures of Pope and Burnside had doubtless in some measure accustomed the North to the disappointment of any hopes raised by the advance of the army of the Potomac. Probably, also, the fact that Hooker, after once halting about Chancellorsville, had not attempted to telegraph any advantage, prepared the minds of his countrymen for the news of his retreat. It is certain that Lee's reputation was now so established in the States against which he fought, that the wildest newspaper

assertions of his being surprised and out-manœuvred were received with much doubt: and it was only, therefore, when intelligence arrived that Sedgwick had stormed the famous works on Marye's Hill, that the more sanguine spirits of the North believed the new campaign to be a great success, and the war about to be ended at a blow. This news was almost instantly followed by revelations of the entirely defensive attitude assumed by Hooker after the flank attack of Jackson. Then came that of Sedgwick's disastrous defeat, and finally of Hooker's recrossing the river to recover a safe position; and hope was changed into a general fear that the Federal host would be unable to maintain itself in face of the victorious foe, and be driven back—perhaps in rout as entire as Pope's—upon the capital. The Government shared fully in this first impression; and partly supposing that Lee was strong enough for some such movement, partly to assuage the present panic, they ordered Heintzelman to lead the mass of troops gathered round Washington to Hooker's aid. It was, however, so soon discovered that the Confederates made no movement in pursuit, that this order was never carried out.

In fact, Lee at no time seems to have entertained any such purpose. With his army reduced to about 40,000 combatants, and his trusted lieutenant, Jack-

son, removed from his side by mortal hurt, he judged it safer to await reinforcements than to attempt to press the beaten enemy. To follow Hooker across by a flank movement was not difficult of itself; but could only lead—should that commander in any degree recover his head, and show his wonted courage—to an attack, or series of attacks, upon an army more than double Lee's own in numbers, in defensive positions chosen by the Federals. Even his late successes had had in the midst of them a considerable check (that mentioned as occurring on the morning after Jackson's wound), which showed that any rash course might lead to disaster. It was suggested, indeed, that a sudden crossing towards the right, near Fredericksburg, might not improbably cause Hooker to draw in his left, and lay bare the depôt at Acquia Creek. But even this could not be done without either dividing Lee's small force, and exposing the divisions crossing over to be overwhelmed, or by stripping wholly his line on the south side, and so revealing his weakness.

He contented himself, therefore, with husbanding his force for more far-reaching designs than these. Each week would, if such designs were approved by the Richmond Government, do much to equalize the opposing armies. For not only were the rest of

Longstreet's corps, and the missing cavalry, at no great distance; but he was fully aware—and this was one of the most powerful reasons for the delay which he resolved on—that Hooker's late defeat would inevitably lead to the stripping of the baffled army by the whole amount of the many two-year battalions that were in it, most of whom could claim their discharge within the next fortnight at the farthest. To this reduction of the Federal strength was to be added that of a number of regiments of volunteers raised under a special call in the preceding autumn for nine months' service: for at that time the Lincoln Government had known fully neither the difficulty of the task they had before them, nor the evil economy of carrying on such a war with repeated supplies of raw recruits, trained but to be disbanded. A very great part of the army of the Potomac would thus melt away of itself, while President Davis could at pleasure reinforce his general with a considerable body of serviceable troops; so that the latter might soon hope to assume the offensive with force sufficient to carry out some decisive operation.

The war press of the North had taken so large a share in forcing General Hooker into his present position of trust, that he was not wholly abandoned by it at once on his defeat being known. It was only

when the details lately laid before the reader came gradually to light, that men became aware how entirely all moral firmness and judgment had failed him in the hour of need; causing his host to succumb to a force which, in numerical strength, was so remarkably the less. Then indeed the public voice sounded loud against him, and his few firmer supporters became ready to join the cry if he should fail to speedily recover his reputation. In the cabinet at Washington his true measure had been long since taken by some of the President's advisers, and an earnest effort was now made by these to bring M'Clellan again into command. But Lincoln and Stanton still had hopes of their general, whose campaign, though indeed a huge failure, was yet of a different character from that bloody tragedy of Burnside's, which had brought the latter's short command to a swift inglorious end. They resolved, therefore, that Hooker should be permitted a further trial; and, beyond some personal compliments of the President to General Sickles, no one concerned in the late battles was marked out for special praise or blame.

While the army of the Potomac was thus paralyzed by the effects of its late defeats, and by the rapid diminution of its numbers, the opposing force of Lee, lying apparently not less idle in its old position

at Fredericksburg, was reinforced gradually and steadily throughout the month of May; for the Confederate president and his general had resolved to change the defensive attitude of the last nine months into an active invasion of the North. Longstreet came back to his post at the side of Lee, who had felt his absence keenly, especially since Jackson fell: and not even that peerless soldier worked out his chief's designs with more entire trust and earnestness than he who now returned. Indeed, the mutual regard of commander and lieutenant was a household word in the Confederate camp, and men wondered that they had been even for a time divided when the shock of battle was, as lately, expected. With Longstreet came the veteran divisions of Pickett and Hood, which had left the army in the spring, and the army of Virginia was raised by these, and additions of new regiments, to about 75,000 men. These were divided, in a more completely systematic way than hitherto, into three corps of nearly equal strength; for the arrangement which we have seen prevailing up to this time, of two unequal *corps d'armée* under Jackson and Longstreet, had arisen almost by accident in the circumstances of the moment, and been continued from unwillingness to interfere with the special arrangements of those

generals, rather than from its fitness for the general purposes of the war.

Longstreet naturally held the first corps, which was composed of troops hitherto forming part of his old command. The divisions were those of McLaws, Pickett, and Hood; and the two latter generals, with their men, were justly proud of former achievements, and somewhat jealous, it may be, of the new laurels which the rest of the army had won in their absence without their aid.

The second corps, composed of Jackson's old troops, was entrusted to Ewell, whom the dying wish of their late commander raised to this high charge, and to the rank of lieutenant-general bestowed with it. He had accompanied the hero throughout every step of his brilliant career in the previous year, until he fell, severely wounded, at the battle of Manasses. Scarcely yet recovered from the effects of amputation, and unable, from the loss of a leg high up, to keep a firm seat on horseback, he was known to be possessed by a consuming energy which would in a great measure supply the place of the physical power he could never wholly regain. His divisions were those of Early, Rodes, and that containing the 'Stonewall' soldiers, now under Edward Johnson, an officer distinguished in the early war

in western Virginia, but who had been removed by wounds received in Jackson's repulse of Fremont, and had not seen so much field service on a large scale as those among whom he now was placed.

No one in the army but felt that the third corps, with the corresponding * rank, was rightly bestowed on General A. Hill, whose name had been noted in every affair of importance from the Chickahominy to Chancellorsville. Under him were the divisions of Anderson, Pender, and Heth. The latter was composed almost entirely of raw regiments of conscripts from the Carolinas, troops of very different calibre from those which formed at least the bulk of the other divisions of the army.

This re-organization being completed, and the

The Southerners in their army ranks have followed nearly the somewhat complicated division of the English. Their brigades and divisions are, however, commanded indifferently by brigadier and major-generals, whilst the rank of lieutenant-general has been reserved for the commander of a corps. Lee, Johnston, and Beauregard early in the war received the rank of full general, one which the French army has no equivalent for, though it is recognized in our service and those of the German powers. The Federals have not adopted any rank above that of major-general, except in the case of Scott, and later of Grant, made lieutenant-generals by special Act of Congress. It is to be observed, however, that they have a wide distinction in the commissions of volunteer generals, which expire soon after the war, and those of the regular forces. Many of their commanders only hold the former. Dix, McClellan, Banks, and Fremont are the highest on the list of the latter.

divisions as fully equipped as might be—their condition as to transport of food and ammunition, and care of the wounded, being indeed very much superior to that which Lee's army had known at any previous time—the first days of June found their general preparing to launch upon his great adventure.

Some of the motives which led to the invasion of Pennsylvania lay upon the surface. The hotter spirits of the South had long been chafing at the strictly defensive policy adopted since Lee abandoned Maryland in the previous September; and to carry the war into one of the richest of the Northern States would not only gratify them, but might bring about the more solid result of alienating support from Lincoln's government at home and abroad, by showing it incapable of protecting even that portion of the Union which was entirely faithful to it. It would also supply, even if made but with temporary success, the present needs of the soldiery, to keep whom in anything like comfort had sorely tried the Confederate Government of late, owing to a general deficiency of provisions throughout their states, too long accustomed to rely on the cornfields of Ohio and Illinois. Further; if Hooker, in his attempts to cover his capital, exposed himself to defeat (and the uncertain, yet self-confident character he bore made this appear

probable enough), he would naturally be driven back to the shelter of the Washington lines, and leave the country to his north open to the Confederates; or, retreating himself to cover it, would *isolate the capital, and expose it to investment and assault.* This latter defect of the Federal position at Washington is indeed worth noting, for it is a pregnant example of the evil which may arise in war from the situation of a capital being fixed too close to a disputed frontier; thus rendering necessary the subordination of the strategy of the war to the security of a city.

But President Davis had other causes more secret, and yet more pressing than these, for desiring an advance of a decided character on the part of Lee. Reference has been partially made to the most urgent of them, which was the difficulty of supplying the army with provisions until the harvest should be gathered in. The rations had been curtailed at various times, especially in the matter of meat, of which the troops had at intervals been served with only one quarter of the liberal allowance originally given.

The other armies of the Confederacy were yet worse off, and Bragg's force in Tennessee could, in consequence, be scarcely kept together, whilst that

intended for the relief of Vicksburg, from this and other difficulties, could not be assembled at all.

The ill-success of the operations of the Confederate generals in this last quarter formed another motive—urgent in itself, yet unrevealed to the many—for attempting some striking movement, such as might result in a success so brilliant as to compensate for a great expected disaster. The Federal general Grant had some weeks earlier begun a series of manœuvres superior both in conception and execution to any yet undertaken by the other Northern leaders. Landing with a large force suddenly, and with but little opposition, at a point of the Mississippi considerably below Vicksburg, he threw himself, by a rapid march and the temporary abandonment of his communications, upon the line of railroad connecting that town with the state capital, Jackson, and conveying all its supplies to the former. The suddenness and audacity of the enterprise carried with them complete success. General J. Johnston, scarcely recovered from his severe injuries at Fair Oaks, was just upon the way to Jackson with a view to collect a force sufficient to check any such inland movement of Grant's, and to protect the rear of Pemberton and his garrison at Vicksburg. But the few indifferent troops which he commanded were

entirely unequal to the encounter of the Federal army of 50,000 well-equipped men, and they were driven off with loss in the action that followed, and thus severed from Pemberton, who had led his forces out from his stronghold in the vain hope of effecting a junction with them. Grant had now no difficulty in compelling Pemberton to retreat with loss on Vicksburg, and shutting him into the lines of that place, while, by extending his right to the Yazoo, a considerable river which flows into the Mississippi just above, he came at once into communication with the fleet of Admiral Porter, and opened a new line of supply for the investing force. This march upon Vicksburg (which occupied from the 2nd to the 19th May in execution) may well rank with any strategical achievement of the war. It showed plainly that Grant's former success at Fort Donnelson was no mere accident, and that he well deserved the early high reputation which it gave him, forfeited partly as that had been by an excess of confidence which led him to expose his command to surprise, and well nigh destruction, at Pittsburg Landing.

Pemberton preferred rather to defend his post than to attend to the order he received from his superior, soon after their separation, to abandon it, and save the garrison by a hasty evacuation. On

the other hand, Grant's means and dispositions were such as soon to deprive the Confederates of any choice in the matter; and they being once securely hemmed in between a well-supplied increasing army and fleet, the reduction of the place became but a matter of time, unless Johnston should succeed in relieving it. The means needful for such an undertaking the latter soon found were not within the reach of the powers conferred on him by his commission as general commanding in the west. About 30,000 raw troops, destitute of the chief accessories of an army, were all he could collect in the direction required. Neither recruits, provisions, nor ammunition were forthcoming in Mississippi, and the Richmond government, sorely pressed by the necessity of maintaining the railroads in their eastern states, had suffered those in Johnston's new department to fall out of repair and be stripped of their stock; so that the transport requisite for concentrating forces from a distance was entirely wanting to his hand.

His difficulties were of course fully known to President Davis, and though they might not be too soon made public, and the weak points of the Confederacy betrayed, that statesman could see scarce any hope of the relief of the beleaguered place. He

had, therefore, now to steel himself against the expected blow of its surrender; and this blow was all the more heavy, as he himself had not long since publicly announced his sense of the paramount importance of maintaining free from Federal conquest the works both of Vicksburg and of Port Hudson, an intrenched post lower down; and the latter would doubtless fall to General Banks—who had advanced from New Orleans against it—as soon as the more important stronghold yielded to Grant. It would require a striking success indeed on the part of Lee to give the South an equivalent for such a loss as this, and for the consequent opening of the Mississippi to Northern vessels.

Neither President nor general entertained any idea of the possibility of conquering and holding permanently a portion of the free states. Their means were insufficient for so vast and distant an undertaking. But in the necessity of gathering supplies of food, and the hope of reaping advantage from some mistake of the Federals in their attempts to cover both Washington and Baltimore with Hooker's reduced army, and thus counterbalancing the ill-success in the west, were reasons amply sufficient to urge them on to carry out their project.

The strategical design for its accomplishment

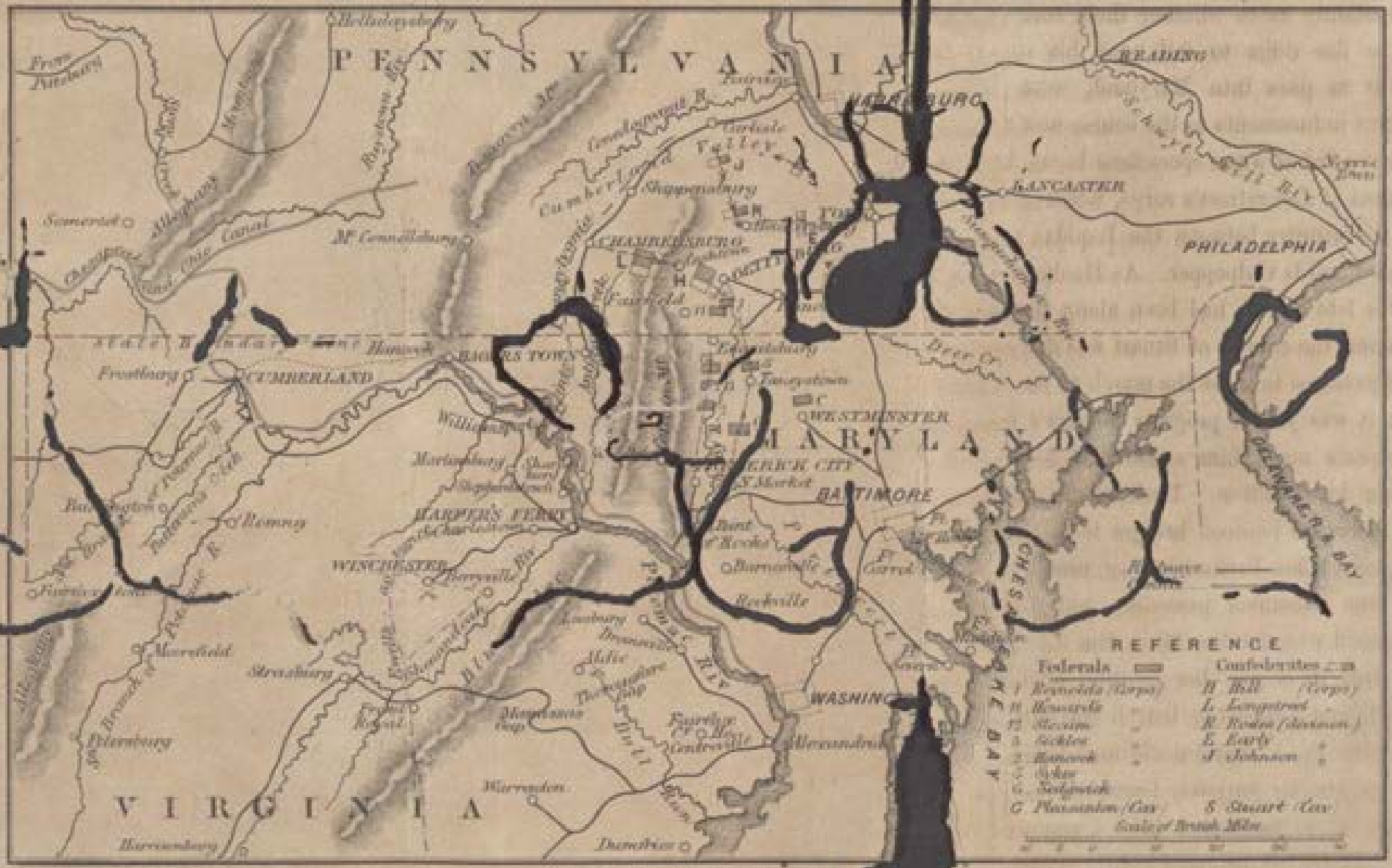
devolved solely upon Lee; and, as one important element of success was the carrying of his army into the north as intact as possible, he decided to move round Hooker's by a wide flank march. To dislodge the latter from his front by direct passage of the river was an idea never entertained, as involving an expenditure of time and strength fatal to his own ultimate purpose: and as the Federal left rested on the Potomac, the movement must needs be made by their right. The country between this extremity of their position and the Blue Ridge afforded sufficient room for the manœuvres as Lee's subsequent operation* in the autumn, as well as that against Pope, plainly proved. But he was so anxious to avoid being drawn prematurely into an engagement, and to carry on his march without interruption, that he resolved upon transporting the whole of his army into the Shenandoah Valley, and issuing forth from its mouth. The retreat he had effected in the autumn by the same line showed how securely this might be done, provided the gaps, or passes, were properly occupied. The prospect of surprising General Milroy and his detached force before they could retire from the valley, and the certainty that the Con-

* *Vide* chap. vi. of this volume, where the operation referred to is detailed.

federates having once moved to the west side of the Blue Mountain, Hooker would, to the last, be kept in uncertainty as to whether their real design was to cross the ridge to fall upon his right, or the Potomac to pass into Maryland, were minor yet important inducements to the course now chosen.

On the 3rd of June operations began by a steady movement of Longstreet's corps, followed by Ewell's, along the country between the Rapidan and Rappahannock towards Culpepper. As Hooker's front, ever since his late defeat, had been along the line of the latter river, the cavalry of Stuart was disposed at the various passages to mask the march as far as possible. Whilst it was yet in progress Hooker's report from the outposts made him aware that his enemy was changing his position. Desirous to ascertain the truth, he caused pontoon bridges to be thrown across at the point below Fredericksburg, used by Burnside's left in the December preceding, and two divisions were passed over on the 5th. But Lee had left his third corps to occupy the position he had so long defended, and perceiving that it was still held by a strong force the Federals made no advance. On the 9th, for a similar purpose, General Pleasanton (who had once more succeeded to the command of the Federal cavalry, Stoneman's health having failed him

Sketch to show the advance of EWELL into Pennsylvania (marked thus . . . . .)
also the simultaneous concentration of the Armies of LEE and MEADE at GETTYSBURG on the 1st July 1863.



Published by Smith, Elder & Cº London, 1865

under his late exertions) was directed to make a reconnaissance in force at Hooker's extreme right. With Gregg's and Buford's cavalry divisions, supported afterwards by two brigades of infantry, he crossed the river at Kelly's Ford, and at another above it, called Beverley, surprising and driving in the Confederate outposts with some loss. Stuart soon met him with W. Lee's brigade, and a series of skirmishes followed, of the undecided character prevalent wherever cavalry take to using their fire-arms. For some time the Federals were unable to unite their two columns; but having once done so they drove Stuart, although reinforced, some miles to the rear, and Lee was compelled to order up Hood's division in haste to support him. This movement obliged Pleasanton to retreat in turn, and he fell back on Beverley Ford: but being pressed closely by the enemy, he did not succeed in recrossing without some loss, his columns becoming separated on the way, and that under Buford (which had formed the right in the advance) being nearly cut off. The Confederates captured three guns and several hundred prisoners; but their advantage was paid for in the person of General W. Lee,* who was severely wounded

See p. 119 for an account of the capture of this general, who was not exchanged until the following summer.

in the action—an event subsequently turned by the Federals to special account.

By this time Lee had assembled his two leading corps round Culpepper, and next day, the 10th, he despatched Ewell on his march into the valley by Chester Gap and Front Royal, with directions to surprise Milroy if possible, and to sweep the Federals from it. Many of the soldiers of this corps, as well as its chief, had served in Jackson's brilliant campaign over the same ground, and the spirit of the rest was such as to show them emulous of the fame then won; whilst in Milroy—whom Federal writers acknowledge to be one of the worst specimens of the politically-raised generals of the war—they had a foe inferior in all ways to Banks. Accordingly the conquest was a swift and easy one.

The advance was formed by the brigade of cavalry under Jenkins (formerly W. Jones's), which was now attached to Ewell's command; and was flanked by a parallel movement of Imboden on the Western Virginia border. Rodes's division led the infantry, and moved on Berryville, a village south-east of Winchester; whilst Early took the direct route to the town, and Johnson diverged to the west, in order to sweep round it and intercept retreat. Jackson himself could scarcely have pushed his men more

rapidly over the seventy miles of bad road, which had to be traversed from Culpepper; and Milroy was completely surprised. Apparently he had considered that his sole duty in the lower valley was to make the secessionist inhabitants feel the weight of the Federal rod as severely as possible, and he certainly showed none of the energy and foresight by which Butler had partly redeemed his severity at New Orleans. He had taken no precautions to obtain by advanced posts, pushed up the Shenandoah, the information which the people on its banks would certainly not furnish for any reason save fear; and the enemy's cavalry were within two hours' ride of his head-quarters at Winchester before he knew of their approach. This was on the afternoon of the 13th, and a slight skirmish ensued that evening; but Ewell refrained from pressing the Federals severely until Rodes should have driven in their detached force (2,000 men under M'Reynolds) from Berryville, and Johnson begun his flank move on the other side.

Next day the Confederate net was tightening round the alarmed Milroy. His troops from Berryville arrived in the afternoon, closely followed by Rodes's skirmishers; and Colonel Mulligan, who lay with a brigade at Martinsburg, finding a first attempt to reach his chief at Winchester interrupted by John-

son's advance, retreated precipitately on Harper's Ferry. A strong series of intrenchments had been thrown up in a commanding position about a mile to the north of Winchester, and into these Milroy and his 7,000 troops withdrew in the later part of the 14th, without any attempt of Ewell's to prevent their retreat thus far; for he was anxious to spare the much suffering town the horrors of another fight. About 5 P.M. Ewell directed an attack upon a detached work, to the west and within gun-shot of the main redoubt held by the Federals. The assault was made by Hayes's Irish * brigade of Early's division with a gallantry freely acknowledged by northern eye-witnesses, and was entirely successful. The result was the enclosure of the Federals in a single large work for the night, in a most dispirited condition, and with the enemy occupying all the neighbouring points favourable to a close investment and general assault next day. That night Milroy, after a brief

* It has been remarkable throughout the war, that the Irish of all classes resident in the South have adopted the Confederate cause with the greatest ardour. Yet there were very few slave-owners among them. But as Dicey has acutely observed, in his well-known work on the Federal States, "It would be as absurd to assert that the slavery cause was only maintained in the South by the 400,000 holders of slaves, as to say that there were no supporters of the peerage in England but the thousand members or so of the nobility themselves."

consultation with his brigadiers, determined to escape under cover of the darkness, and at least to save his own neck, which he knew his recent conduct in the valley had much endangered. At 2 A.M.—ere Ewell had decided to attack—the Federals moved out towards Martinsburg, but soon encountered Johnson, who had just arrived to intercept that line of retreat. A confused skirmish followed, and Milroy succeeded in effecting his own escape to Harper's Ferry with 1,600 of his command; but he had left in the hands of the Confederates 4,000 prisoners, a great quantity of stores, and all his artillery, consisting of three field-batteries and some heavy guns.

Ewell now ordered his cavalry to make a demonstration towards Harper's Ferry, as if he were about to attack that place: but he directed his infantry towards the Potomac, through Martinsburg, and crossed on the 22nd at Williamsport and Shepherdstown. His instructions were to move into Pennsylvania by way of Hagerstown, without further delay than such as was necessary to clear the valley of all Federal troops, and to gather up the spoils left by them in their flight.

Returning to the Rappahannock, we find Hooker, about the 14th, quitting his position on that river. Having learnt that a large force of Confederates had

moved into the valley, he naturally feared that they might descend through the Blue Ridge on his right; and to prevent such surprise from that direction, he marched his army (now numbering scarce the half of its strength before the late advance on Chancellorsville) in a north-westerly direction on Warrenton. This suited exactly the views of Lee, who was then able to withdraw Hill from Fredericksburg, and to push Longstreet up the east side of the Blue Ridge, with orders to seize Ashby's and Snicker's Gaps, the two next passes north of that used by Ewell. Stuart advanced on Longstreet's right to conceal and protect his march. These movements, and the despatch by Hooker of the corps of cavalry under Pleasanton for a similar purpose, led to sharp skirmishing on the 17th and 18th between the light horse of the armies. On the former day, Fitzhugh Lee and Stuart repulsed advanced parties of the Federals, under Kirkpatrick and Gregg, in affairs of that unimportant character, which the nature of their detached service, and the very cautious tactics of the troopers on both sides, stamped upon nearly all such engagements. On the latter, the Federals seem to have had the advantage: and, on the 21st, Pleasanton, who had been gathering his three divisions, together with a small supporting column of infantry, for the purpose of making a

decided examination of the passes, moved against Stuart at Aldie, a place where the roads to Ashby and Snicker's Gaps diverge to the south and north respectively. Stuart's force of two brigades was quite outnumbered, but as he fell back but slowly on the former pass, taking advantage of the ground to delay the Federals as much as possible, Pleasanton broke his troops into several columns, and pushed them on by-roads to the right and left, so as to turn the Confederates and try to cut them off. In this he nearly succeeded, and only by hard riding and some sharp fighting did they finally escape, and fall back on some infantry brigades of Longstreet's corps, which had been detached to support them and hold the Gaps. Though unsuccessful in its immediate object, Pleasanton's movement (in which he at first made considerable use of the infantry whom he had carried rapidly up to the Ridge on the cruppers of his dragoons) proved clearly that all Lee's army was on the other side of the mountains. Hill had, in fact, by this time followed Longstreet; and Lee was preparing to cross the Potomac with these two corps, and support the advance made by Ewell: for he had now detained Hooker sufficiently long near the Bull's Run ground to accomplish his extensive flank march without any interruption. It was evident also that

there was no design of the Federal general to stop the coming invasion by the counterstroke of a bold march on Richmond; or to attempt to force the passes into the Shenandoah, and give Lee the advantage of the difficult country there, by pressing him to receive a general engagement.

In the meanwhile Ewell was crossing his troops, and uniting them at Hagerstown, which they reached on the 24th. General Imboden and his cavalry had continued their parallel advance to the west to cover the left of his columns, and, crossing near Hancock, had dispersed some parties of the fugitives from Winchester, who were collecting in that direction. From Hagerstown Ewell followed the line of the Pennsylvanian central railroad due northward on Carlisle, so as to threaten Harrisburg, the State capital, which Lee hoped to seize. He took with him the divisions of Rodes and Johnson; but detached Early from Chambersburg eastward through Gettysburg upon York, an important station on the line of railroad which joins Harrisburg and Philadelphia with Baltimore. Lee has since stated that the object of this diversion was to persuade Hooker that the Confederate movement was directed that way—in fact, towards Philadelphia; and in this it seems to have succeeded, and thus to have confined the Federal operations

entirely to the east side of the South Mountain. On the 24th of June, Hill crossed his corps near Shepherdstown at Boteler's Mill, the very spot where he had so sharply repelled M'Clellan's advance the year before. From thence, he followed Ewell to Chambersburg, reaching that place on the 27th; while Longstreet moved after him, escorting a very heavy waggon-train, destined to be filled with supplies wrung from the Pennsylvanian farmers. Ewell's troops now occupied the whole valley of the Cumberland (which is a sort of continuation of the Shenandoah valley, extending northward from the border of Maryland to the Susquehanna), and were busily engaged in collecting stocks of corn, meat, and horses, to be sent into Virginia for future needs of the army. Private plundering was most strictly forbidden, and payment made in Confederate paper money for all that was taken. Indeed, the discipline and forbearance of the invaders was everywhere remarked, and commented on by the Northern journals. Harrisburg had been roughly intrenched, and was defended by the militia of the State under the command of General Couch, who had been recently sent to take charge of the defence of the country to the north of the Susquehanna. But these were fully occupied by the advance of Ewell under

Jenkins, an officer of great activity, and especially fitted for his present service by his local knowledge, for he had long resided at Carlisle. His troops easily drove in or captured the scouting parties from the city; and near M'Connellsburg, westward of Chambersburg, some Federal cavalry approaching the enemy's cantonments were dispersed on the 28th with considerable loss.

On the same day General Early, arriving by the Gettysburg and Hanover Junction, occupied York in force, and pushing parties along the railroad which leads thence to Philadelphia, caused the Federal Militia covering the passage of the Susquehanna, to destroy the magnificent bridge by which the line crosses that river. Other detachments of his corps made feints along the line to Harrisburg, where the railroad approaches the river near Middletown; while Early levied contributions in the neighbourhood of York.

Thus far all had gone smoothly with the invading army. The supplies obtained by Ewell were large, and of immense value. The army was subsisting practically for the time at the expense of a rich and untouched portion of the North. The population, mostly of German descent, in the country occupied, though bitterly hostile in feeling, showed no signs of

armed resistance. The North was thrown into general consternation, and all the neighbouring districts trembled in anticipation before the horrors of war. Not less important, the ill-feeling between Pennsylvania and her neighbouring States, New York and New Jersey, broke out so sharply in this time of need, as to prevent any rapid concentration of militia, sufficient to check for even a time the further progress of the Confederates. At Baltimore, the feeling of favour to the South which existed there so much more strongly than in the western districts of Maryland, was only restrained by the iron pressure exercised by General Schenck. More fortunate in his position, and more active and able than his former comrade Milroy, who had now been suspended with disgrace to await trial for his past defeat, he was busied in preparing for the defence of the city against the Confederates, and succeeded in doing much to strengthen his post; whilst he repressed with sternness—his enemies said with brutality—all attempts at Secession demonstrations.*

Here, however, as at Washington, there was great cause for uneasiness among the Federal autho-

* His Provost Marshal was not long after condemned by a court martial to a year's imprisonment for exactions committed at this era of terrorism.

rities. It seemed an obvious movement for Lee to proceed eastward, and break the communication between these two cities, so as to isolate the latter from the North. The advance upon Harrisburg, and thence westward on the flourishing city of Pittsburg, the Birmingham of America, was equally open to the enemy, and might inflict a terrible blow upon those branches of industry now feeding on, and being fed by, the war. It is natural, therefore, that those critics, both in America and England, who refuse to recognize the vital connection of the safety of an invading army with its preservation of its communications should have commented severely on the supposed over-caution of Lee; who failed to begin any such operation in the first few days of his invasion; and who, agreeably to his own report, contemplated nothing further than the capture of Harrisburg, of which he was almost at the gates, until he should have disposed of the Army of the Potomac, and thus should know his retreat to be open. Let subsequent events show how far he was right in his judgment.

We left Hooker not many miles to the south-west of Washington, wholly uncertain as to the movements of his wary foe, and engaged chiefly in guarding his right flank against that attack which he dreaded from the mountains. Nor was his fear wholly unreason-

able, for it was part of Lee's original design to take advantage of any carelessness his opponent might exhibit in the covering of the capital against his movement. Saved by this caution from the attempt, Hooker acted but very feebly during the interval through which we have traced the movements of the Confederates. He showed, in fact, none of that needful quality of a general (the most important of all, according to Napoleon) which consists in the power of extracting swiftly and surely from the different reports, true or false, which reach him, the real state of the case. Stuart's cavalry had purposely been left by Lee on the western side of the Blue Ridge, to conceal as long as might be the fact that the movement into Pennsylvania was made by the bulk of the Southern army, and was not (as many Federal officers first believed) the mere predatory inroad of an advanced guard. So completely was this service performed, or so slow the observation of Hooker, that he did not make up his mind to admit the truth, until Lee had crossed the last of his infantry, and was moving his main forces towards the Cumberland valley. On the 24th—when pressing orders had reached him from Halleck to make some movement to relieve the frightened North—when Governor Curtin was striving to bring up his raw

militia (of which 100,000 had been called hastily to the field) to defend the passages of the Susquehanna —when Harrisburg was hourly expecting to be summoned—and Schenck was preparing to receive the attack, the success of which might cause the city he governed to declare itself a part of the Confederacy—on the 24th he had at last set his army fairly in motion northward from Fairfax, and was pressing it, hastily enough now, across the river near Drainsville, and along the line of the Monocacy towards Frederic.

He had under him the same seven corps, which had lately been involved in his disasters at Chancellorsville; nor was there any change in their commanders, save that Hancock had succeeded Couch, on the latter's being named to the charge in Pennsylvania. The new chief of corps was an old and worthy division commander, who had had many hard blows since he first distinguished himself as brigadier at Williamsburg, at a time when daring was much needed to bring spirit into the Federal levies; he had borne himself nobly in the dreadful disaster of Fredericksburg; and his appointment showed that courage and efficiency were, as in other armies engaged in long and serious struggles, beginning to find their proper recognition in that of Lincoln. Causes we have previously noted had diminished the strength of

the whole force to but little more than one half of that which Hooker had led to defeat in April. The divisions, as well as the corps, were of very varying strength, and the average number on the rolls of the latter was barely 12,000 men.

We may search the history of modern campaigns in vain to find a more striking example of the effect produced by "operating on the enemy's communications" than that of this movement of Hooker's. The first sound that reached Lee of the advance of the Federal columns to the north of the river, caused him to suspend all further action in any direction tending to draw him further from his base. The Northern army, once assembled in force at Frederic, would have the power of cutting him off from Virginia by a very slight advance, whilst keeping its own line of supply from Washington completely covered from his attempts. He resolved instantly, therefore, on concentrating his whole army to face the enemy on the east side of the South Mountain, and thus preventing Hooker's further movement westward. A glance at the map* will show why the little town of Gettysburg, which is situated about thirty miles north of Frederic, and just half way from that place to the city of Harris-

* See the Map at p. 16.

burg, was chosen as the most convenient point whereon to assemble his scattered divisions; lying, as it does, nearly equidistant from the stations they occupied at Hagerstown, Chambersburg, Carlisle, and York. Accordingly, on the 30th, the morning after receiving the intelligence, orders were issued for the whole army to converge speedily on the selected place of meeting, soon to be for ever memorable in American annals.

It has been thought that, in thus acting, Lee was governed rather by the laws of theory than by the facts of the case. It may here be pointed out that this view is hard to support by anything but personal opinion. No examples taken from practical warfare sustain it. Indeed, the closer we examine the campaigns of that most brilliant and daring of modern strategists, the great Napoleon, the more plainly do we discern the infinite pains which he took to secure free communication with his own base. It is true that in one great instance—the struggle round Dresden and Leipsic in 1813—his conduct afforded a striking instance to the contrary; for, on that occasion, throwing military rules aside for a political object, he disregarded this principle, and clung closely to the line of the Elbe, in the heart of Germany, without taking the needful pre-

cautions to cover his line of supply and retreat towards France. But this campaign ended, as is well known, in utter disaster and ruin; and that, as Sir G. Cathcart has clearly shown* in his invaluable commentary, mainly from this very neglect of sound doctrine, and by no means (as French writers would assume) from any superiority of the forces enrolled against him. The fact appears to be, that the excessive demands for the supply of completely-equipped modern armies render attention to the rule (which no great general but Hannibal has ever systematically laid aside for any lengthened period) more than ever indispensable in the present age.

Before Lee had received the news which thus paralyzed his offensive operations northward, and caused him to regard but the one serious peril, Hooker had ceased to command the army of the Potomac. His conduct had of late given as little satisfaction to his troops as to the War Office at Washington. The authorities there, and the army itself, justly censured the uncertainty and dilatoriness which had allowed Lee so undisturbed an entry into northern soil. The press also had been utterly alienated from their former favourite by some stringent regulations he had lately put in force in his

* See Cathcart's War in 1813. Book iv., Chap. I.

army, to prevent his movements being too early made known. He appears also at this time (though a part only of the facts have been made public) to have had various differences with Halleck on the subject of the defence of the Northern borders, and especially as regards the works at Harper's Ferry, the Maryland side of which the latter general desired to retain at all hazards against Hooker's opinion. It seemed dangerous to supersede the commander of the only trained force near Washington, when a collision with Lee was evidently approaching so rapidly: but the signs of distrust and discontent were so palpable in the army (where the intelligence of the men, and their lax discipline, fostered a sort of public opinion) that these alone would have justified Lincoln in the step he now took of forcing Hooker to resign.

His supersession, once resolved on, was carried out instantly. The public outcry for a recall of M'Clellan was to be prevented at all hazards, and the choice was made at once, before the vacancy became known beyond the Cabinet. Nor can Lincoln, as we conceive, be greatly blamed for his unwillingness to replace in chief military command at this crisis the man whom a large part of the press had openly urged to seize supreme power by the army's aid; and who, since his retirement, had tacitly ac-

cepted the station of chief of the Opposition or Democratic party. Be this as it may, the vision of M'Clellan returning to supreme control of the forces round Washington, with all the increase of power and fame which a third call on his personal services would surely carry with it, was more than the President's patriotism could sustain.

It was evident, as this appointment was not to be, and time pressed for immediate action, that the command must be bestowed on one of the generals now with the army. Six of these had for some time commanded corps; but the recent misfortunes of Howard and Sedgwick barred any claim of theirs, whilst Sickles had not long before been a civilian, and to entrust to him the charge of saving the North in its great peril was thought too great an experiment. Of the remaining three, Meade (originally brought up to the Engineers, but a retired officer before the war,) was now well known as chief of a corps, having in that capacity done special good service in the Chancellorsville campaign, where, as has been noticed, he performed the duty of covering the army in their retreat with complete success. All had there recognized in him a leader calm and brave in need, and the panic of his division at Fredericksburg—due greatly to the effect on his raw troops of

the death of its leading brigadier—was now forgotten, or remembered only for the exertions he had used to restore it to order. On him then fell the onerous task to which Hooker was just unequal. He had served throughout the campaigns of the past year, except for the short period following the first fighting on the Chickahominy, when he had been wounded severely, and for a time laid by. Born of American parents, but out of the United States, he was the only officer of mark in the army of the Potomac who was ineligible as a future President; and, without doing Lincoln's cabinet the injustice to suppose that this was the chief cause of their choice, we may fairly suppose that it may have been favourable to his being selected before Reynolds, who had the name of a more dashing officer, and Slocum, who, as well as the former, was considerably his senior as a general of division.

The army had by this time learnt to associate bluster and outward demonstrativeness with ill success; and when Meade's appointment was made known, the well-known appearance of the general, who, though in the prime of life, was worn and bent, and had the quiet reserved aspect of a man of books rather than of the sword, was reckoned no cause of unpopularity. All in his own camp knew him for

a steady, trustworthy soldier, and on his name, as the new leader of their opponents, reaching the Confederates (many of whose officers had had acquaintance with him in former days), it was recognized as bringing a new phase of matters with it, and announcing grave work to be done before they could really count their present position an advantage.

Meade assumed command early on the 28th June at Frederic, but the rearmost corps of the army had not yet reached that place, and whilst they were arriving he had a few hours to consider his next operation. Information, tolerably to be relied on, had reached him that the enemy in Pennsylvania numbered about 75,000 men, or rather less than his own army; while the various reports from different quarters showed that they were scattered round him in a semicircle extending from Hagerstown to York. To him, as to Lee, Gettysburg appeared the most central point of their field of operation, and by seizing it he might divide from Lee's main body the troops which were to the north-east (where Early's division had by its activity towards the Susquehanna multiplied itself in rumour largely); whilst the same movement would cover Baltimore directly, and secure Harrisburg from attack by threatening the enemy's

rear if he moved that way. It would, moreover, bring the Federals near Couch's line of defence for reinforcements, and give them the command of a direct line of railway (the branch from Hanover to Gettysburg) communicating with Baltimore and Philadelphia. It seemed far preferable to the more brilliant part of a direct march on Hagerstown through the South Mountain, where were positions easy for Lee to defend with his rear, whilst he called in his advanced troops; or which he might meet by the bold stroke of abandoning his former communications for a day or two, to concentrate to the north, and descend on the flank and rear of the Northern army, thus reversing the game altogether by cutting them off from their base. This last, it should be noticed, would have been actually open to Lee to do, from the resolve he at once made of moving his whole force on Gettysburg; it was, therefore, no unreal danger which Meade avoided by his choice.

Early on the 29th he began his advance due north by Emmettsburg. Not four-and-twenty hours more elapsed before the strategic point he aimed at was fixed on by Lee, as we have seen, for the gathering place of the Confederates. So, then, the opposing armies, unknown to each other, were racing

for the same position, held by each general as so important; and in thus doing they were moving straightway to the weightiest contest the war had yet seen.

CHAPTER II.

GETTYSBURG.—THE FIRST AND SECOND DAYS.

THE town of Gettysburg, lying about ten miles east of the main ridge of the South Mountain, is yet surrounded by long swelling hills and undulations, which extend far from that chain towards the Susquehanna, and make the intervening country picturesque in itself, and full of strong military positions. The broken nature of this *terrain*, and the absence of Stuart's cavalry—who were completely separated from their own army by that of the Federals which they followed northward—prevented Lee's staff, during the march of the 30th, from becoming aware how near they were drawing to the foe. On that day, Hill's corps began its march from Chambersburg through the South Mountain by Cashtown; and was followed next morning by Longstreet's, as the single road through the pass became clear by the advance of the other. General Lee's head-quarters were with

these corps; and Ewell was making his movement at the same time from Carlisle with Rodes's division, Johnson bringing up his rear with great caution, as it was desired to conceal the withdrawal of the army with its heavy trains, as long as possible, from Couch's force at Harrisburg. Early, who still occupied York, received his orders somewhat later; but he speedily called in his detachments, and quitted that town on the evening of the 30th, shaping his course due westward at first, so as to rejoin Ewell on the march.

Stuart was also moving in search of his headquarters, but, as usual with him, showing much of his peculiar activity upon the way. He had seen the last of Hooker's army cross the Potomac, and without difficulty carried his division, about 3,000 strong at this time, over that river at Seneca, twenty miles above Washington, on the 27th and 28th. Marching due northward, with detachments pushed out on either flank, that covering the right passed within view of the intrenchments round Washington, and destroyed a supply train of 200 waggons destined for Meade. The main column crossed the Baltimore and Ohio railway, without more delay than was necessary to break up the rails, and reached Westminster, the first important point on their way, on

the 29th, surprising and cutting up two squadrons of Delaware cavalry there posted, of whom but fifteen escaped. From Westminster a short line of railroad runs direct to Baltimore; and at the latter city the alarm of the Federals was great on the 30th, for they not unnaturally supposed the hostile cavalry to be the advance of Lee. But Stuart had moved on northward that same day, and passing near Hanover, made his way to join the Confederate forces at Carlisle; for he was as yet unaware of the important movements on Gettysburg. He arrived at Carlisle on the 1st, and on learning that Ewell had left, and that the place was occupied by Federal forces from Harrisburg, he summoned it to surrender. This demand was refused, and after firing the Government buildings with some shells from his light guns, he retreated, having received a hasty summons from Lee to join him at Gettysburg, where the decisive battle was now begun.

The movements of the Federal army were much simpler than those just recounted. The main road from Frederic to Gettysburg runs due north on the west side of the Monocacy—here but a small stream—as far as Emmettsburg, a considerable village. Its course is thence tolerably straight in a north-westerly direction to Gettysburg, which lies at a distance of

thirty-six miles from Frederic; Emmettsburg being not quite half-way from the former place. Along this road Meade marched the main body of his army on the 29th, the 1st and 11th corps leading, and the 12th and 3rd following closely. The progress was necessarily but slow; and these four only reached the vicinity of Emmettsburg on the afternoon of the 30th. They were followed by the 2nd; whilst the 5th moved by another road through Taneytown, more to the right. This last corps was now commanded by Sykes, whose services in it, at the head of his small division of regulars, gave him just claim to the vacancy caused by Meade's elevation. The 6th corps, having acted as rearguard in the late march under Hooker, had not yet received orders to move from the cantonment they had just reached at a small place called Manchester. Buford's division headed the advance of the main column. The rest of the cavalry under Pleasanton moved considerably to the eastward by Westminster, being attracted that way by the reports of Stuart's operations, which caused Meade to fear for his right flank; and their advance under Kilpatrick all but overtook the rearguard of the Confederate general, being within a few miles of it on the 30th, near York, and capturing a straggling convoy containing some of the supplies which followed

Early's division. Late on the 1st, Kilpatrick gained information of Stuart's proceedings at Carlisle, and moved on Heidlersburg in hopes to intercept him on the road to the Confederate army; but was again too late for his nimble antagonist, who had crossed his track two hours before on his way to Lee's head-quarters.

On the 1st July, at daybreak, the 1st corps, followed by the 11th, left their encampment near Emmettsburg, and arriving near Gettysburg at about 11 o'clock, A.M., found Buford already skirmishing with some Confederate troops who had appeared to the westward of the town on the Chambersburg road. Reynolds, a bold and active officer, did not hesitate or wait for instructions in this emergency. He knew Meade's intention to secure this, the one central point, where the roads from the Cumberland valley and the whole line of the Susquehanna converge; and hurrying his men onward through the town, advanced to meet the enemy, who were, in fact, the leading troops of Heth's division, and the head of the long column formed by Hill and Longstreet. At the same time the Federal general sent orders to Howard (temporarily under his command during the march) to bring the whole 11th corps on to his support; and despatched to Meade news of the engagement he was

commencing, instructing his messengers to urge the other superior officers upon the road to quicken the movements of their troops.

These precautions taken, he rode to the front, where some of his batteries had already warmly engaged those of Heth. The superiority of weight and accuracy, however, was with the Confederate gunners, and Reynolds soon found it necessary to withdraw his artillery, a movement which produced immediate pursuit on the part of the Confederates, whose skirmishers came rapidly forward in hopes of capturing the retreating guns. Reynolds brought up his leading division, Wadsworth's, to cover the latter, and checked the enemy's advance for a while; but his gallantry, as he rode in front of his line, made him a conspicuous mark for the deadly Southern bullets, and struck by one of them through the neck, he fell mortally wounded, dying ere he could be removed from the field.

The loss of this brave soldier—personally more popular than any other of his rank in the army—might well have affected the behaviour of his men most seriously. But the spirit of impulse which he had brought with him into the fight did not die with him; and his corps—led by the senior general, Doubleday, an old artillery officer, who had long been

distinguished in the army of the Potomac—repulsed with a gallantry, since freely acknowledged by their enemies, the charge which soon succeeded the fall of Reynolds. This was made by a brigade of Heth's young troops under Archer; and the fighting was, for a short time, all but hand to hand; a very rare circumstance in any modern war, the Federals capturing Archer and some hundreds of his men in their countercharge made on the retreating enemy. Their success was but momentary; for Hill was by this time on the ground, and had deployed Pender's veteran division—the next to Heth's on the march—on the right of the latter in some wooded ground, to the south of the road. These two outnumbered considerably the three Federal divisions opposed to them,* and after a brief resistance the latter fell back on Howard, who had arrived to support them with two-thirds of his corps, and took up a new position not far west of the town. Here they made another short stand against Hill; but the fate of the day was most decisively settled by the arrival of Ewell's

* The reader should observe that throughout this campaign the Confederate divisions were nearly twice as strong as those of the Federals. The army of the latter had, as usual, maintained the whole of its general staff, notwithstanding its late striking reduction in numbers. No attempt to consolidate the reduced corps was made until Grant's appointment next year.

force.* That officer, leading on Rodes's men in person, had that morning effected a junction with General Early at the village of Heidlersburg, just ten miles north of the present scene of action; and hurried by the sound of the cannonading, marched forward rapidly by two country roads running near each other, and leading directly on the right face and flank of Howard's line of battle. His arrival was, on a small scale, just similar to that of Ziethen and Bulow on the field of Waterloo. Rodes, whose column was to the right (or west) of the other, smartly entered into the fight with Barlow's division of the 11th corps; and before these had time, with the aid of Schurz's Germans who supported them, to make a new face to the north, Early came pressing along the very line of the ridge which they occupied, and turned the battle into a retreat. This soon grew into a rout, as regiment after regiment began to fall back and crowd along the road into Gettysburg. Hill, scenting the disorder, threw some of Pender's troops rapidly along the other flank of the retreating column, who received their volleys without any attempt at pausing to return them; and it became Howard's only hope to effect a passage through the town, and occupy a strong position to its south, where he had left his rear division (Steinwehr's) in

reserve, with the cavalry of Gregg, and where he every moment hoped to hear of the arrival of Slocum and Sickles. His men fell fast upon the way, and a great part of the 1st corps, with many of the 11th, threw down their arms and surrendered to the pursuers, rather than encounter the storm of bullets which rained upon the avenues leading into the town. Near the latter, Hill's troops were joined by Ewell's; and two of Early's brigades, taking the van in the pursuit, chased the flying column through the streets, and beyond them towards the position about a mile southward, where Howard was collecting and reforming them on his reserve. He had received no reply to his first earnest entreaties to Slocum to come to his assistance; and that general—unwilling to accept any of the responsibility of rushing into an engagement, without orders from his chief—continued his onward march so slowly, that he spent the whole afternoon upon the five miles of road which intervened between himself and Howard. He arrived just before dark, followed closely by a part of the troops of Sickles, whose corps, though at midday further off than the 12th, had been hurried on by their more impetuous leader. Their succour would therefore have been too late to benefit Howard, had Lee followed up his first advantage with the four

divisions, which had been hitherto so victorious; and it may scarcely be doubted that the Federals were too weak and dispirited to hold their new position against the very superior numbers with which he might have attacked it. Half of Reynolds' corps, with a number of his guns, were missing; Schurz and Barlow's divisions had suffered nearly as much; and the spirit with which the Northern troops had begun the contest in the morning had been dissipated by their severe losses, and the three miles of disastrous flight.

But Lee having carefully examined the hill on which the retreating enemy had sought refuge, and being quite uncertain—for there was much wood on parts of its crest—as to the amount of supporting force on which Howard had retired, decided that it was too late in the day (the hour being nearly 5 P.M.) to begin what might prove a general engagement with the bulk of the Federals. Including Anderson's division, he had but 40,000 men within reach; and nearly all of these had been marching or fighting all day without food, and had fired away most of their ammunition. An unsuccessful assault was to be feared as a mighty evil in the present isolated position of his army; and nothing else could be anticipated, if the heights in front were guarded by the main body of the Federal army, fresh for the en-

counter. The unexpected meeting with the two corps just beaten had revealed plainly Meade's design of moving in force on the point chosen by the Confederates; and from the boldness with which Reynolds had entered into the battle, it appeared as if he had merely regarded himself as an advanced column, acting not far from his supports. A rapid weighing of these considerations induced Lee to recall the skirmishers, who were already breasting the opposite slopes close to the Federal position; and if we, at this distance of time, point to facts, showing the decision to have been a mistaken one, it is but for the purpose of causing the reader to remark how impossible it is in warfare for the soundest judgment to act infallibly.

The Confederate chief having thus resolved to allow his men to rest in their pursuit, and to await the coming of his hinder divisions before making a new attack, the fighting for the day terminated. Slocum and Sickles arriving about dusk, as before noted, took up their positions respectively on the right and left of Howard. The whole line, during the later part of the evening, was under the command of Hancock, to whom the General-in-Chief, on receiving the first intelligence of the fall of Reynolds, had despatched an order to ride to the front and take

personal charge, maintaining a position near Gettysburg, if possible. At midnight, Meade with his staff came up, having halted for some hours at Taneytown, in the middle of his columns, to await Hancock's report and act according to its nature. Towards morning, the 2nd corps (Hancock's) and that of Sykes (5th), with the rest of Sickles', drew near on the two roads from the south; and Pleasanton's cavalry were reported as approaching on the right.

The first appearance of matters, as detailed by Hancock and Howard to their new commander, was discouraging enough. The muster-rolls of the 1st and 11th corps showed a loss of 10,000 men; of whom more than one-half, with ten guns, had been captured by the enemy. Gettysburg itself, and all the approaches to it from the north and west, being occupied by the Confederates, it was clear that Lee could no longer be prevented from uniting the whole of his army; and the first object of the late march was already missed. Reynolds's over-eagerness had, in fact, led him into such a defeat as had lost to the Federals the advantages gained by their rapid movement on that place; but he had atoned for the error with his life, and the fate of so active an officer, from whom much had been expected since he first took

command of a corps under M'Clellan, added to the general sense of disaster.

On the other hand, Meade's calm mind fully grasped the counterbalancing advantages of his situation. His army was already completely collected, with the exception of Sedgwick's (6th) corps, to which orders had been despatched to make a forced march; and it appeared to be most favourably posted for defence. A good road, leading directly from Westminster to the rear centre of the position, and securely covered by the nature of its flanks, promised uninterrupted supplies from Baltimore for any time that it might be necessary to remain stationary. Lee's late movement had, on the contrary, made his line of communication into Virginia both circuitous and lengthy; nor could he either maintain himself permanently in the front of Meade or assume the offensive against a more than equal force so strongly placed, without bringing up the whole of his troops, and thus stripping his rear in the Cumberland Valley, and laying it open to Couch and the Pennsylvanian militia; whilst a retreat of the Confederates upon or through the South Mountain would leave the latter at liberty to effect an immediate junction with the army of the Potomac, and to bring Meade formidable reinforcements. Trained as an engineer—a branch

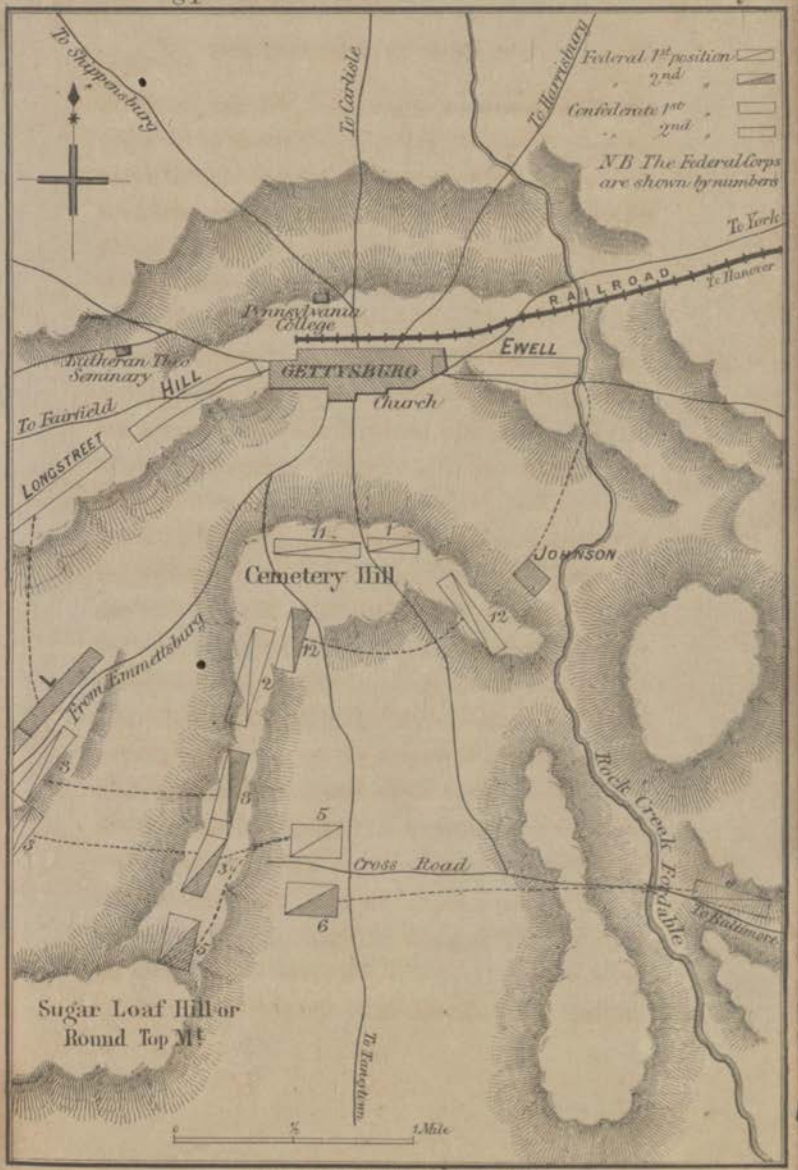
of the service for which he had early shown great professional aptitude—the new Federal chief was naturally disposed to give their full value to the field intrenchments, so much used in American warfare, and he knew that no troops were more apt in raising them than his own. Before such works he had watched Burnside's army utterly shattered, not many months before, with slight loss to the defenders; and such might have saved Hooker's right from its terrible rout at Chancellorsville, where Meade's own corps, early placed under cover, had suffered but little. A few hours of steady labour would make the naturally strong ground the Federals now held most dangerous for the bravest troops to assail; and in the present position of affairs, that the army of the Potomac should maintain itself securely so close to Lee's line of retreat and supply, would be, with or without a Confederate attack being repulsed, a moral and strategical victory. Thus reasoning, Meade gave the necessary orders; and his men, fully conscious of the great advantage of cover, worked with a will all night. Musketry trenches and rifle-pits were hastily dug wherever the ground was open; cover was lightly thrown up for the guns by a similar use of the spade; and formidable breastworks of felled trees were made by the ready western axe, wherever the higher part of

the hill was crowned with wood. Morning found this labour still proceeding with strong reliefs of voluntary working parties, and the Confederate chiefs, reconnoitring soon after daybreak, discerned enough of its results to understand both the assembly of Meade's whole army in their front, and the difficulty of attempting its defeat by any direct assault. By 7 A.M. the whole of the Federal troops were in position, except Sedgwick's corps; and their number, notwithstanding the losses of the day before, about equalled those of Lee, whilst the hours of moonlight had been well employed to strengthen a front made by nature extremely defensible.

The original position taken up by Howard on the 1st, on a steep hill just south of Gettysburg, of which place it forms the cemetery, had now become the right centre of the Federals. The same ridge sweeps away in a horseshoe form to the south-east and south-west, forming a curve about three miles long. Rising much more at some points than others, it everywhere commands the valley round its north side, and into which it falls in some places too abruptly for artillery to sweep the portions at its foot. About the cemetery there is much bare ground, but the Federal engineers had here added considerable cover by their trenches to that of the stone walls already existing. The

BATTLE OF GETTYSBURG.

Shewing positions before & after the attacks on the 2nd July.



Published by Smith, Elder & Co. London, 1865

right shoulder of the ridge, extending somewhat eastward of this part, was high, and curved sharply to the south, taking a line nearly perpendicular to the front; and this flank was well protected by the special difficulty of its slope, which was rocky and wooded, and ended in a brook, known as Rock Creek, one of the upper forks of the Monocacy, which coursed along its foot. About a mile to the Federal left of the cemetery the swell rose again steep, high, and bare at the top, in a sugar-loaf form, and took the name of Round Top Hill. Between this point —the left centre of Meade's line—and the cemetery, there was much wood along the crest, of which good cover had been made by felling trees. The valley in front of the whole centre, as also of the left—where the hill in its western bend near Round Top, though continuous, became less sharply defined—was open cultivated land, in few places less than half a mile across, and swept effectually by the Federal batteries. The line of the hills had everywhere a good slope to the rear, giving excellent cover to the reserves of the army, and allowing the ammunition and other supply waggons to come without danger into the hollow thus formed in rear of the centre. This slope affording safety to all the troops not in first line, did away with much of the objection which would otherwise have

attached to the position as being too crowded for the mass of troops, 70,000 strong, which was designed to hold it. Its only marked defect lay in the extreme abruptness of portions of the front preventing them from being searched by the fire of the defenders; but this was directly counterbalanced by the difficulty to the assailants of the ascent, which in such places was only to be accomplished in such a scrambling fashion as to deprive their ranks of all approach to order.

The ground was occupied, according to Hancock's original arrangements adopted by his chief, in the following order:—The 12th corps took line to the east of the cemetery, along the right flank of the position, and above the line of Rock Creek. At the cemetery were posted the remains of the 1st corps (now under General Newton) and the 11th. The 2nd and 3rd were placed along the ridge to the westward, the former on the lower central part, the latter near to Round Top Hill; and the extreme left was to be observed by Kilpatrick's cavalry, who, however, were this day occupied with unconnected skirmishing far to the north, and were not brought in until daylight on the 3rd. The 5th corps was held in reserve in rear of the right, for Meade and his staff through all the morning expected the main attack of Lee on

that side, where the main road from Gettysburg to Baltimore, running from the former place with a straight course of three-quarters of a mile, ascends the hill and crosses the ridge just to the east of the cemetery. Here also the extreme flank was guarded by a division of cavalry, that of General Gregg, posted eastward of the brook. They were strengthened in this belief by observing considerable movements of troops and guns taking ground on the left of the Confederates.

Passing to the side of the latter, we find Lee and his staff employed in reconnoitring from an early hour, and holding busy consultation as to the course to be pursued. We have seen that not much more than the half of their army had reached the point of assembly on the evening of the 1st. Pressing orders had been then despatched to the divisions yet absent, and it was known that Johnson was not far off, whilst M'Laws and Hood were already coming up and taking their places on the right of the Confederate position. The latter ran about five miles along a swell of ground which faced and enclosed with a wider curve that held by their foes. Not so marked as the latter, and wooded in most parts, it was admirably suited for concealing the movements and strength of the troops which occupied it. The left was formed by Ewell,

whose divisions under Early and Rodes fronted the cemetery. The former was disposed in and about the town of Gettysburg, which extended down the slopes towards the Federals; the latter was beyond it in the wood, leaving a space of the intended line still further unoccupied, until Johnson should arrive. Westward of the town, across the ground where the Federals had closed their disastrous retreat upon it the day before, were Hill's divisions; Heth, Pender, and Anderson taking up their posts in succession. M'Laws now coming up was placing his brigades more to the south-west along the curve, with Hood upon the extreme right. The road from Chambersburg, along which Longstreet's men were advancing, approached in this quarter so near that which the rear of the Federal column from Emmettsburg moved, that some of the soldiers of Sickles' last division, straggling from their bivouack in search of food at dawn, fell into the midst of the Confederates on their march, and were made prisoners. At 8 A.M. Lee had all his men upon the ground, excepting Johnson's division, expected before midday, and that of Pickett, who was bringing up the rear from Chambersburg, and could not arrive in time to engage. This last numbered barely 5,000 men, having left Virginia without two of its finest brigades, which had been

detained for some special service in North Carolina until too late to join the army on its movement. Without it Lee could count upon nearly 65,000 men for his battle. But it was a slower process to prepare them fully for it, for they had outmarched the reserves of ammunition, and it must needs take the greater part of the day to bring up and distribute the latter, with the guns, along the extensive line held by the troops. Ewell, therefore, whose divisions were the farthest from the road which brought the supplies, was left to complete his disposition for occupying the attention of the Federals on their right, which his movements, as we have seen, successfully accomplished. With Hill and some favourite generals of divisions, and, above all, his trusted friend and lieutenant, Longstreet, Lee took earnest counsel as to the course to be pursued.

It was evident that Meade stood for the present wholly on the defensive. His formidable position, already sufficiently intrenched, was judged to be held by a force stronger by at least 10,000 men than their own army (for the delay of the 6th corps was of course unknown to the Confederates), and could not be assailed without some risk of failure. Was it necessary to attack at all? And if it were, should the attack be delayed until next day, when Pickett's

arrival would complete the strength of the infantry? Should Stuart's exhausted state (for many of his squadrons needed a day's rest before further service) be reckoned as an element of weakness, seeing that the Federals had considerable bodies of cavalry with them, and some of these close to the only roads by which retreat was practicable? Such were the vital questions to be discussed, and on their right solution seemed to hang the whole prospects of the war.

Two courses offered themselves for choice should the obvious danger of the assault be shrunk from. Knowing as we now do the result of the latter, we may point out here what seemed the probable consequences of each alternative.

The first was that of a direct retreat, at least as far as Maryland. There was but little doubt it might be conducted with safety by the Cashtown road used in the advance, and another through Fairfield, which lay a little to the south of it. Hagerstown and the vicinity of the Potomac might thus be reached without the necessity of a battle; and it would be easy to maintain the defensive in the old position of Antietam, until the now heavily-laden train of the army were passed securely into Virginia. But for the Confederates to retire thus before a force scarcely greater than their own, and composed of troops over

which they had so lately triumphed at Fredericksburg and Chancellorsville—to abandon the wealthy territory just entered without striking a blow for its possession—would be such a moral defeat as their cause could ill endure, and would show their army to the world as shaken from its enterprise by the first sound of determined resistance, and out-manœuvred by the first movement of the foe. To the ardent spirits around Lee it seemed so utterly distasteful, and to himself so entire a sacrifice of the great advantages which any slight mistake of Meade's might presently confer, that it was scarcely entertained at all.

The second course lay in endeavouring to change the character of the coming battle into one less completely offensive, so as rather to receive than give the first attack. But here intervened the doubt as to whether Meade could be tempted at any terms to quit his position of vantage: for holding it he might plainly make himself more and more secure, and receive reinforcements for his own command, whilst he gave time for the Pennsylvania levies to collect, and either join him, or attempt a movement up the Cumberland Valley, which should straiten Lee and threaten his communications. And should the latter determine to renounce the idea of assault-

ing the heights, his own position was too extended and ill-defined—Ewell's corps especially too dangerously stretched away from the line of retreat—to be considered safe in case of Meade taking heart from his opponent's indecision, and moving his more concentrated force against the Confederate line, which he might reach with equal facility in any part. It would be necessary, therefore, to fall back to some stronger ground; and the eastern slope of the South Mountain offered itself naturally as both suitable for the defensive, and as being within easy distance of the Cumberland Valley. The arguments for this more prudent measure would have been probably strengthened had Couch's levies been justly estimated. The truth is that, bereft of the chief part of the assistance at first expected from the adjoining states, the call to the Pennsylvania militia had brought Governor Curtin but a fourth part of the number he had expected, and those who appeared in arms, though of sound spirit and limb, were so raw, untrained, and disorderly, that it would have taken several weeks to have made them fit for the field. Placed under cover, they might have done good service; but as regards offensive operations they could have had no special influence on the immediate fortune of the campaign. One of Lee's

veteran divisions, or two at the most, would have amply sufficed to keep them from any advance on his rear from Harrisburg, and with the rest of his army he should have found no difficulty in holding the South Mountain position ten miles to his rear, so as to defy the whole of Meade's. Had this course been adopted, it is of course impossible to say that the latter would at once have followed him up, and staked his fortune on an assault which, failing, would have left the North open to prolonged invasion. But the cry for vigour was so loud at Washington, and wherever the pressure of the Confederate inroad was immediately felt, that we may conclude that such a movement would before long have been the result. We know also that the issue could not have been so disastrous to the South as that which followed the result of the council. Lee and Longstreet, it is believed, inclined to the side of prudence, for they knew better than any the immense advantage the Federals had in their intrenched position, so encouraging to troops who had learnt to mistrust their own firmness in the open field. But it was speciously urged that to draw off Ewell's immense trains of supplies by the roads already occupied by the other two corps would be difficult if not impossible, especially in the exhausted state of the cavalry.

And through all must have had a consciousness that the danger of an early attack from Meade was of the smallest, and that a firm front would allow them any reasonable time to move quietly from the present position; and though Lee was doubtful as to the wisdom of attacking at all, and Longstreet specially objected to doing so in the absence of his third (Pickett's) division, yet the will of the younger and more ardent spirits of the conclave prevailed: and they were unanimous for an assault to be made before any reinforcements could reach Meade, or the Confederate soldiers lose the impulse of the yesterday's success. Lee, therefore, gave the orders to his chiefs of corps to engage, so soon as the ammunition was fairly supplied, and the batteries posted, on all parts of the line.

In this yielding to the judgment of others, less responsible for the consequences—supported though they were by the excited and somewhat over-confident feeling of the whole army—we see the one weak point in the military character of the chief. Lee lacks the strong decision, amounting to harshness in moments of anxiety, which strongly marked the otherwise opposed characters of Napoleon, Wellington, and Frederick. The very amiability which had been before noted in him as too often preventing

him from interfering with the mistakes of subordinates, now proved the cause of his leading his men to a defeat so decisive as to shake altogether the well-won prestige of the army of Virginia. Deeply did the cause of the Confederacy rue the error so made. But it has since been acknowledged, as it was owned upon the spot, with a noble frankness which must raise the man in the world's esteem. Napoleon, unmoved by losses, was yet unpitying of those sacrificed by his errors. Frederick, overbearing in manner always, was unjust to those who shared his disasters. Wellington's army never knew the sad test of a defeat in open field; but we may be bold to say, that the temper which dealt hard measure to those who were but the instruments of his will at the bloody breach of Badajos, would have made him a yet harsher master had the sacrifice in the fatal ditch been offered in vain. Lee in his hour of trial may well afford to be likened to the greatest among these.

The battle once resolved on, and that for the day now wearing, the details of preparation were left entirely to the chiefs of corps, as had long been the practice in the army of Virginia, where none but first-rate men had held that rank. The Federals were still strengthening their position through the morning; but so great were the difficulties of ground for

developing the line of the Confederates, that four o'clock was past before Ewell and Hill had posted their brigades and batteries completely, and were ready to begin their allotted task. Not less than their commander, nor their men, did these two generals feel keenly the loss of the great man whose death had proved their own advancement. Hill had followed and shared, without a day of absence, the unbroken series of triumphs which began when Jackson first joined Lee's army on the banks of the Chickahominy. Ewell had been still earlier in the war the special friend of the departed hero; and so moved by affection for him, as to become changed in his whole character and bearing: so that men, in the devout enthusiast known formerly as profane and violent, pointed to a living evidence of the active religion of one whose loss none could replace. Even in this moment of excitement, when first about to test the real worth of their position at the head of a corps of 24,000 men acting freely under the first general of the time, each felt, as did their soldiery—Ewell's especially, as was natural—that there was an element of success wanting, which had never been fully missed until that day.

Lee's plan of battle was simple. Ewell's movements had been made somewhat conspicuous of a

purpose, and had had the desired effect, as we have noticed, of arresting the attention of Meade and his staff, who looked for their chief struggle on that side. The real attack has to be made by Longstreet on the right, with his two divisions, supported by Anderson's—the next of Hill's to him—and covered by a heavy concentrated fire on the Federal left and centre. Hill's two other divisions were to remain in reserve, and Ewell's to distract the Federal attention by feints as far as possible. Should Meade weaken his right, as seemed probable, to repulse Longstreet, the attack on it by Ewell along the east of the Cemetery Hill was to be made real.

Soon after 4 o'clock, 200 guns distributed along the Confederate line, opened their fire, and an equal number answered them from the opposing height. The air was filled—say many observers—with fragments of shells, and the crashing of the branches over the heads of the hostile armies was incessant. But experience has shown that this sort of general artillery fire is productive of wonderfully little damage; and as Cathcart has remarked, it has very little effect on the nerves of veteran soldiers. Only on the bare right of the Cemetery Hill, where Ewell's guns brought a converging fire, was much mischief done, and the space effectually swept of all who were not on

duty behind the trenches and walls. Some of the idlers, indeed, who had crowded there through the morning, descended the rear slopes with such rapidity, as to spread a panic among the teamsters and baggage-guards in the hollow, and fugitives began to make for the Baltimore road, but were abruptly stopped by pickets which Meade's staff had posted with a view to such a contingency.

For about an hour and a half the armies on either side remained motionless in their cover. Then Longstreet gave the signal; and his two divisions, advancing rapidly from the wood where they had been formed, moved against the extreme left of the Federals. We have said that at this time the flank of Meade's line was formed by the corps of Sickles, between whom and the cavalry was a considerable interval of space too wooded for the horses to enter. And here a mistake had been made which not only should bring censure on its immediate cause (as indeed in the official sense it has done), but which reflects some discredit upon Meade and his assistants for their not observing and correcting it in time. Sickles—whom his brave conduct at Chancellorsville had brought into popular notice, and whom great part of the Northern press had exalted unduly, because, like other ignorant writers

on military matters, they either have an instinctive jealousy of the trained soldier, or believe the art of war to be one taught by nature—Sickles, we say, somewhat puffed up by his temporary fame, and by the injudicious praise of political friends, who declared him to be the proper choice for general-in-chief, forgot the first duty of a soldier, and took upon himself to better, as he supposed, the orders he had received through Butterfield, the chief of the Federal staff. These were simply to post his corps as strongly as possible on the ridge to the south-west, in a line with Hancock's. This would have left him with his front overlooking the hollow so often referred to, along which, in this part, the road from Gettysburg to Emmettsburg makes its way. On the eastern side of this road, however, there rose a lesser ridge, wooded partly, and irregularly connected both with Round Top Hill and with that other on which Longstreet's corps were posted. Seeing this to be unoccupied, and concluding that to meet the enemy's attack half-way would make it easier to repulse him, Sickles had moved his troops across the intervening half mile, and thus had approached Longstreet closely, shortly before the latter commenced his attack. Nor had he made his change of ground known to his own commander, whom the dense smoke which filled

the air at first prevented from observing this rash proceeding, and who reached their flank too late to arrest it. The first intelligence of it came from the rifles of the Confederates of Hood and M'Laws, as they swarmed over the swells of ground which lay in front of Sickles, and fell upon his corps with the furious yells peculiar to the Southern army. A rifle-shot from a Federal skirmisher wounded Hood badly, as he led on his men with the daring which had first brought him into notice at Antietam, and has since made him the favourite divisional general of the Confederate soldiery. But his troops, and those of M'Laws, continued their advance without a check, and overlapping Sickles altogether, forced him at once to give up his advanced position, and drove his corps back across the valley with great slaughter. Sickles exerted himself to the utmost to preserve retreat from becoming mere rout; but he was soon wounded in the leg severely, and carried off, and Humphreys, who commanded his most advanced division, lost near the half of it before his men regained their proper station; whilst Meade himself, and Birney (who, for the time, succeeded to the charge of the corps), strove in vain to check the approach of the enemy to the main line. The Federals had moved but a single battery to the

front, and this fell partly into the hands of the pursuers, who now pressed forward with shouts of triumph to the ridge beyond, undismayed as yet by the hot fire which opened upon them from the Federal guns posted along it.

While Longstreet's own corps opened the fight with this marked success, that general received but a partial support from Anderson's division, which had been intended to take up the movement on his left. Three out of the five brigades of which it was composed, advanced indeed into the valley, and made their way across it, driving the skirmishers of Hancock's corps from the hasty breastworks they had protected themselves with. But the advancing Confederates here came under a tremendous fire of artillery; and though they charged to the very muzzles of the opposing guns, and drove the artillerymen from them, two reserve batteries moved up by General Warren (who, acting as chief engineer to Meade, had taken his post on this part of the field) enfiladed them with deadly effect. The central one, Perry's, gave way. The other two, under Wright and Wilcox, pressed nobly on, and gained the lower part of the heights, driving Hancock's men from their first line of works. For a time it seemed as if the hill would be theirs, for Longstreet's brigades

were also beneath it. Hood's division (which in the attack upon Sickles had *twice* changed its commanding officer) had reached its foot, where it was so steep in parts, that they were secure for a time from the Federal artillery; and between these troops and Anderson's, Longstreet himself had headed a charge of M'Laws's leading brigade, Wofford's—which had hesitated to encounter the fire of the opposing batteries—and had also forced the first Federal line.

Here, however, their success was ended. The struggle of Meade's 3rd and 2nd corps, although telling terribly upon them, had given him time to make use of his very concentrated position, and to succour them efficiently. Opportunely enough, his 6th corps had arrived upon the ground, having marched thirty-two miles since daybreak on the 1st, when they left their quarters at Manchester, in Maryland. They took at once the position of reserve, hitherto held by the 5th, whilst Sykes brought the latter into full action on the left of the line, and supported the remnant of the 3rd, who might otherwise have yielded their strong ground to Longstreet. Slocum's divisions were at the same time moved rapidly across the rear of the Cemetery Hill to the support of Hancock; Meade thus stripping his

extreme right, which he now judged not to be really threatened, and which was at last held by one single brigade. The arrival of these auxiliaries turned the scale against the Confederates, who were not in any formidable strength at those points where they had reached the enemy's works. Sykes's men, coming freshly into action, poured in such continuous and heavy volleys as effectually checked Longstreet's divisions from any further advance; and on their right Hancock's corps, supported by the 12th, made a decisive countercharge upon the two isolated brigades of Anderson's, which were in their lower breastworks. Hancock himself, in bringing them on, had need of all that unflinching courage under fire for which he had long been noted; and his leading brigadier, Zook, fell dead before a murderous volley of the Confederates, which for a few minutes checked the advance. But the Federals were in too great force upon the decisive spot to yield ground. The regiments of Hancock's 1st division, rallied by General Hayes, poured in a heavy column into the space between Wright and Wilcox, whilst another body outflanked the former on his left, where he was completely unsupported, and threatened to cut him off. The Confederates turned at last, and were driven rapidly across the open ground, leaving half

their number behind them. In better order, Longstreet's troops were also retired to the intermediate slope first won from Sickles; but they had also suffered heavily, and Barksdale—a tried brigadier of M'Laws's veterans—lay mortally wounded in the Federal hands, while Semmes, an officer of equal rank and reputation in the division, was borne off only to die.

Beyond the three right brigades of Anderson's, so often mentioned, Hill's corps was but little employed. Loud complaints, indeed, did not fail to be made in the army, that they were so held in hand as to give no assistance either to Longstreet or to Ewell. The flank attack of the latter was made soon after the one already described had forced Sickles to retire. Rodes and Early (who formed the right and centre of the corps respectively) here led their men against the Cemetery Hill just towards dusk. They were received by Howard with much coolness; for his men were well posted behind walls or prepared cover. But in spite of the heavy rifle fire—far more destructive than that of the guns, which, from the steepness of the Federal position, went mostly over the assailants' heads—a brigade of Early's division (the Irish one, under Hayes, so distinguished at Winchester,) dashed clean into the advanced works held

by the defenders on the face of the hill. They were not promptly supported, however, and, finding no cover, were driven out with loss by the searching storm of bullets from above. At dark Johnson advanced to attempt the extreme Federal right, for the Confederates had observed the hill beyond the cemetery to be gradually stripped of its defenders; and, in truth, it was now held by but a single brigade of the 12th corps, under General Greene. The pickets of the latter became mixed with the advancing skirmishers of the other side, and being thrown into confusion turned and fired in the dark on another Federal brigade under Cobham, which, followed by part of the 6th corps, was moving to their support; and ended by abandoning their line of rifle-pits on the slope. These were occupied all night by Johnson's men, secure enough in them for the time, by reason of the steepness of the hill above.

Thus closed the second day's battle; and if the Confederates seemed to have gained some advantages, these were apparent rather than real. For Longstreet had not entered the actual line of the Federal position; and Anderson's men had only reached it to be driven back with heavy loss, leaving, in fact, nearly as many prisoners behind as Hood and M'Laws had taken from Sickles. As to the lodgment of John-

son's men beyond the cemetery, Lee was aware that he could not convert it into a real flank attack but by carrying the bulk of his army to his own left, and thus exposing his line of retreat, which lay from the other extremity of his position, to an extent which would be fatal should he meet with a repulse next day. Jackson indeed might have been entrusted with a detached corps for such a purpose. This kind of movement would have been just suited to that great soldier; and we may suppose that his loss was now most keenly felt; for that which suggested itself as possible when he was present, and which he had so splendidly achieved on the great day of Chancellorsville, was here not attempted. Lee has indeed, in his report, given the partial successes of Longstreet's and Ewell's, as chief motives for renewing the action. But we believe that his army was still swayed by the same impetus that had forced on the contest; and that on the morning of the 3rd, when it dawned, he was, as before, loth to check the ardour of others who longed for the instant decision of battle. He was much influenced also, beyond a doubt, by the knowledge of the enormous gain to the Southern cause which must accrue if Meade's attitude of defence were once changed into a retreat, and central Pennsylvania left unprotected. On the other hand, to fall back

now, would be to acknowledge the whole invasion of the North a failure, and to make of the past two days' actions, counted by the army as successes, practically a repulse. Though a safer course than to dash his divisions a second time against the enemy's position—the full strength of which was now seen—this would have been bitter to the Confederate general, and most repugnant to the general sentiment of the troops, which the defeat of Reynolds on the 1st, and exaggerated reports of the success over Sickles just gained, added to the remembrance of former victories, had raised to a dangerous pitch of contempt for their adversaries.

But the best justification of Lee's determination is to be found in the feeling of discouragement which at this time is known to have existed on the Federal side. Meade did not, it appears, as his enemies have since alleged, at any time resolve to abandon his ground. But it has been shown, upon inquiry before a Committee of Congress, that the possibility of such a step being taken was canvassed between himself and his staff; so that General Butterfield (who during Hooker's command had been largely entrusted with the details of all movements) took the precaution of drawing up an order ready to be issued to the respective corps, *should the contingency of a retreat*

occur. Among the rank and file there was generally a good spirit. That they were actually fighting for the defence of their homes gave strength to the always earnest patriotism of the American portion of the army. None of the latter, indeed, had fought better than the Pennsylvanian Reserves in the division of the 5th corps, originally commanded by Meade, one company of which had been raised at the very town of Gettysburg, which they overlooked in their advance to the aid of the beaten left. But there had been no striking advantage gained on their side to shake that natural sense of the inferiority of their commanders, which they brought from the banks of the Rappahannock; and as it was quite unknown to the mass that Sickles's error of presumption had led his corps into their disastrous position, the belief was general that the battle had opened ill for them in that quarter, and that Longstreet's advantage might be but the preliminary of one of those great "flanking movements" which the past history of the war had left them just reason to dread. "We have fought but three hours and a half," says a letter from the field; "have lost on both flanks, have called every reserve we had on the field into action, and with daybreak must hold these shattered columns to the work again." The next

day's victory caused these feelings of depression to be forgotten, or denied in after days, but their existence at this time it is impossible to doubt; while a corresponding degree of confidence as to the final result of the contest cheered the Confederates, as they rested weary under arms and waited for the dawn.

CHAPTER III.

GETTYSBURG.—THE CLOSING DAY.

Daylight had scarcely broken, and shown each army its adversary still maintaining his position unaltered, when fighting recommenced upon the Federal right. It has been noticed that Johnson's first line had here gained and held the advanced rifle-pits thrown up on the previous night along the slope of the hill by the 12th corps, the latter having been gradually withdrawn by Meade's orders after the defeat of Sickles, until but one brigade remained to hold the steep ground over Rock Creek. General Geary, to whose division this brigade belonged, had brought back the rest of his men after dark: but the Confederates could not then be dislodged, and the attempt to force them from the cover they had gained ended in confusion and loss, as has been already noticed. But they were not long to hold this advanced position undisturbed. Meade had been

engaged till late in the night in consulting with his staff on the measures needful at this critical time, and had resolved to drive them back at early dawn, before reinforcements could arrive to their support. A brigade, under Wheaton, of the hitherto unused troops of the 6th corps was drawn to the right to support Geary; and the latter officer, thus strengthened, was directed to recapture his lost rifle-pits as soon as the day should break. A prolonged and heavy fire of skirmishers commenced before 5 A.M., the only immediate result of the order; and for hours it continued to attract the attention of the rest of the armies with but little result: for the troops on both sides clung to the cover they held, and the steepness of the ground almost forbade manœuvring. The contest was at length decided by the Federal artillery, which their officers gradually planted on every prominent part of the position that might reach any portion of the contested front. To the fire of grape and shell, which they brought to bear upon Johnson's men, Ewell made but little reply; for few of his guns could reach the Federal flank, and he was compelled to be very sparing of the scanty stock of ammunition doled out to him for his share—intended merely as a feint—in the work of the day. Thus shaken by losses which they could

not avenge, the Confederates yielded the works they held to an advance made on them, about 8 A.M., by General Geary; and the latter even pursued them to the woods beyond, from which they had emerged the night before to the attack. Here, however, Ewell had a heavy force in reserve, and the Federals were repulsed in their turn, and followed to the disputed line of pits; but the Confederates did not again seriously attempt the latter, for the weight of Lee's onset was to fall elsewhere. About eleven the desultory firing along Rock Creek Valley died away, and the battle in that quarter seemed to be regarded as closed, save for some slight skirmishing between a party of Confederate horse, who made a show of threatening the Baltimore road, and Gregg's division of cavalry, which had been sent to the east of Meade's position to cover that important line from any such attempt.

Lee had, in fact, given up any design entertained the day before of making serious use of Ewell's advance, and changing his main attack from right to left, at the risk of uncovering his line of retreat. His plan of battle was of the simplest order, and varied chiefly from that employed on the 2nd, inasmuch as the grand effort to break the Federal left centre was to be more concentrated on one point.

Longstreet was again to undertake it, directing for that purpose Pickett's three brigades on the same part of the Federal line which Anderson's men had attempted in vain. Heth's division, which, though almost intact, had lost its commander by a wound, was to support Pickett by an echelon movement across the valley on his left rear under Pettigrew, their new general. M'Laws was ordered to make a demonstration against the Federal left; but his troops were not intended to be seriously exposed. The divisions of Hood and Anderson, now terribly reduced by their efforts of yesterday, were kept altogether in reserve on the right and centre respectively, with the exception of Wilcox's brigade of the latter, which was to strengthen Pettigrew in his support of Pickett. The way into the Federal lines was to be prepared by a careful concentration of the fire of all the available guns of Hill and Longstreet upon the part about to be assailed; and as ammunition had to be brought up from a considerable distance, it was noon before these generals had posted their batteries, under cover of the wood, in the required positions, and found them ready to open fire.

Six hours of daylight thus passed over the centre and left of Meade's line, and brought no repetition of the assaults which had so shaken the Federals

the day before. Such a delay was not without an important effect upon the defence of the position. Not only were the more open positions strengthened by additional intrenchments, reveted partly (a prodigality strangely characteristic of the Northern army) with knapsacks filled with earth; and the exhausted ammunition waggons replenished from the reserve supplies, now slowly coming up: but the more practised among the soldiery, detecting the desultory nature of the firing about Rock Creek, and observing the apparent quietude of the masses half-concealed among the woods of the opposing ridge, augured that Lee had found some unexpected difficulty in renewing the battle, and that his troops were less eager for the fight than on the preceding day. Confidence began to take the place of doubt; the strength of the position became the more apparent the more it was regarded; while the feeling of patriotism, natural to men fighting to repel invasion of their soil, which warmed the levies of the threatened states, spread to those of New England and the West.

Meade's arrangements for the defence varied but little from those adopted the night before. The preparations of the enemy in front of his 2nd corps did not escape the observation of his staff; and hence when Howard, at an early hour, sent advices from

the Cemetery that the battle on the right grew hotter, and threatened to extend itself to the centre, his chief was not deceived, and sent only the command to keep his men ready under arms. Hancock was placed in special charge of the threatened front, which his corps had so brilliantly defended the day before; and his strength was increased by the addition of a whole division of the 1st corps, Doubleday's, which had the least suffered in the defeat of Reynolds, and of another brigade under Stannard; both being withdrawn from Howard's rear, and moved to the left centre. These troops and his own corps formed Hancock's first line; whilst portions of the 12th and 6th corps acted in support. Beyond Hancock, Sykes held the left with his own men, and the remains of the 3rd corps, now under Birney.

Meade passed the anxious morning hours at a small farmhouse, which he had made his headquarters, on the sheltered slope behind Hancock's line. Here he received the reports which told him that all had been done which could be to turn to right account the advantages his position gave. The firing on the right towards 9 A.M. grew more remote and feeble, and ceased to give him any uneasiness; and an hour later, encouraged by the apparent quietude of his enemy's main body, he directed Plea-

santon to detach Kilpatrick's division of cavalry (at last arrived from their unsuccessful pursuit of Stuart's rearguard) by a detour to the west, so as to cross the road to Emmettsburg, and to threaten the communications of Lee upon those beyond.

It was nearly one in the afternoon before the seeming repose of the masses of the hostile armies was fiercely broken. Sixty of Hill's guns and fifty-five of Longstreet's then opened suddenly their fire upon the line of Hancock; and for an hour and a half the air was rent by their discharges, to which the Federal batteries, scattered along the intervals of the brigades, and chary of spending their ammunition before the expected assault, made but feeble reply. Notwithstanding the shelter thrown up, the Federals, as a natural consequence of their close order, suffered very severely. The enemy's shells ranged through every part of their line, and down the slopes beyond among the reserves. Meade's own head-quarters were struck by several; and Butterfield, who was still in attendance on him, was wounded by a fragment of one which burst within the walls. But this tremendous fire slackened soon after 3 P.M., as Longstreet deliberately marshalled his troops for the great essay, the issue of which was to determine the battle. He was not about to head them in person; for he

had yielded to the remonstrances which came alike from chief and followers as to his rash exposure of a valued life the day before. He directed from his stand at the edge of the wood the movements which followed; and as Pickett's division left its shelter to take the van in the coming onslaught, their chief looked with confidence on the veteran soldiers and tried general whose ardour and endurance he could trust to the full. Pickett himself was conspicuous in the front as his men moved into the open ground. His name had once been known widely to the world as that of a blustering captain of foot, whose violence to unprotected English settlers at the disputed Island of San Juan went near the involving two kindred empires in war. Placed now in a position of responsibility better suited to a spirit ever restless and craving for fame, he led his division to a charge which, for its undaunted valour, history may be challenged to surpass. It will be remembered that two of his brigades were absent. The three he had under him, averaging about 1,500 each, were commanded by Garnett, Kemper, and Armistead, men who yielded to none of their rank in the Confederate service for courage and experience. Deployed in two lines (Kemper and Garnett in the first, Armistead supporting), and with a strong body of skirmishers

running in advance, the division moved forward into the valley with a steadiness which drew admiration from friend and foe, and which the storm of shell at once rained on it from the Federal batteries wholly failed to shake. Pettigrew followed close upon the left flank, and Wilcox on the right, making, in all, a mass of 15,000 combatants, who, for the first part of the advance, kept such compact order as threatened to bear down all opposition. But Pettigrew's troops were but raw in battle. Their desultory services on the coast of North Carolina had but ill-prepared them for the fearful ordeal of that fatal valley; and before they had completed the descent of the slope on their own side, they wavered and held back in parts, causing those who watched their conduct to augur ill for Pickett, should he trust to their support. Meanwhile his first line approached the Emmettsburg road, where a low stone wall, backed by a line of slight trenches, sheltered Hancock's advance. Here first the Confederate soldiers began to fire, advancing still, and in a few minutes the Federal skirmishers yielded to the weight of the approaching enemy, and forsook their cover to retreat rapidly on their main position, leaving many of their number stretched upon the plain. Pickett followed rapidly across the same ground which Wright had traversed the pre-

ceding evening, his men breaking into a run as they approached the enemy's works. Their fire swept the gunners from the advanced batteries as they rushed in, and the colours of Kemper and Garnett's battalions waved for a short space in triumph within the Federal lines. For a short space only; for whilst these troops had so nobly fulfilled their task, the supporting columns had failed completely in keeping their allotted distance. The men of Pettigrew's division had become more and more disordered as they drew near the enemy's guns, and beheld deep gaps made in their ranks by the discharges of shell and grape. Let those who would judge these troops severely, remember that they were opposed to batteries, compared to whose cannonade that of the heaviest 'guns of position' of Leipsic or Waterloo was light and trifling. They faltered under it at last, so decidedly as to lose all order, and when Hancock's second division under Webb* was thrown forward from his right so as to threaten their flank obliquely, Longstreet's order to meet it by a corresponding manœuvre was despatched in vain, and the Confederates commenced a retreat which no effort of their officers could check till they reached the wood. Wil-

* Gibbon's properly, but Gibbon was in command of the corps for the day.

cox's men not unnaturally felt the influence of this panic, and although they went forward for a time, and approached the hill on Pickett's right, just where, in the yesterday's charge, they had carried the works, they also lost heart, and dreading to meet a movement made to outflank them, fell back without any vigorous effort to penetrate Hancock's intrenchments.

During the ten minutes of breathless suspense which had elapsed since these were pierced by Pickett, the Federal general, with his wonted coolness, had rallied his men, and now assumed the offensive with overwhelming force. His own divisions and Doubleday's gathered round the front and flanks of the two leading Confederate brigades, and poured on them such a concentrated fire as seemed to sweep them from the earth. Kemper, on the right, was borne off mortally wounded, his person barely rescued from capture by a gallant charge of his men. Garnett, on the left, was killed almost at the same time, and no officer of rank survived long enough to claim their fatal commands. Pickett, after some vain efforts to re-form his melting regiments, yielded to the hopeless nature of the odds, and the danger of being surrounded, and ordered a retreat. Armistead strove to cover the first line as it fell back, but the enemy

pressed him on all sides, and the storm of bullets shattered his brigade. He drew his men back to re-form them under shelter of a fence which had been left standing at the foot of the hill; but this delay only increased their peril, and Webb's regiments sweeping round their flank enveloped them in a circle of fire. Armistead was mortally wounded, and some hundreds of his surviving soldiers threw down their arms and surrendered. The rest had joined the relics of the other brigades, and were slowly falling back across the fatal valley, a few of the boldest exchanging shots with their pursuers; whilst the Confederate batteries, silent when their infantry were on the opposite slope, reopened fire to shelter them in their retreat, and Wright, with his Georgians, advanced to cover them as they regained their line.

The records of modern warfare may be ransacked in vain to find an instance of courage more great than these troops of Pickett's had shown. It may be that the remembrance of their desolated homes (for all his battalions but two were drawn from Virginia) had nerved them to special daring. But their losses tell most eloquently how desperate was their struggle. In addition to two out of their three brigadiers, they had left fourteen field officers behind them, and only a single one of that rank had escaped unhurt. Two-

thirds of their comrades remained dead or captive in the enemy's lines; and more bitter still, two only of the thirteen standards which had waved boldly in the advance, returned with the bleeding relics of the division. Nor were the Confederate losses summed up here. Heth's command, though failing to attain the enemy, had yet advanced far enough to become engaged and suffer considerably, and had left many wounded in the Federal hands. Among these was Trimble, who, though a major-general in rank, and once much favoured by Jackson, had here commanded only a weak brigade.* In their centre, though not engaged, the Confederates had lost an officer much lamented by Lee, Pender, who was mortally hurt by one of the distant shots which fell among his division. M'Laws's demonstration on the Federal left had been carried so far as to become a serious conflict, ending in his leaving on his retreat 300 prisoners in the hands of Sykes, whose position was unshaken. In this part of the battle the Pennsylvania Reserves bore the honours of the day, as in the fight of the 2nd on the same ground; when the Confederates of Semmes's brigade had lost their commander, and many others

* Trimble had only lately joined head-quarters, having been for some time on detached service in charge of the scattered parties of the Confederates towards the north of Virginia, previous to Lee's advance in that direction.

of their officers, in a charge against a battery of the 5th corps near the Round Top Hill. Ewell also co-operated to some extent in the attack on Hancock, by occupying Howard's attention; and Johnson resumed his skirmishing with Geary, driving the latter again within the line of his rifle-pits. But the irregular fight upon each wing possessed little importance for either party: the battle had been waged and won in front of Hancock's line; and though now removed with a severe wound (as was also his second in command, Gibbon), that general had stayed long enough to see thoroughly accomplished the work confided to him by Meade.

The latter now rode slowly with his staff along the lines of the 1st and 2nd corps, and was welcomed by the cheers of the exulting soldiery, as he paused here and there to say a few words of praise. A very different scene was meanwhile enacted on the hill opposite, where Lee and Longstreet were re-forming the battalions which had for the first time tasted the bitterness of defeat in open field. The latter never had more need of the staunch courage which had earned him the name of 'Bulldog' among the Southern soldiery; and it stood him in good stead as he rallied Pettigrew's and Wilcox's men in person, and pushed forward his available guns to sweep back

the pursuit expected from the Federal side. Lee, who had hastened to the spot from his chosen station near Gettysburg, was even more conspicuous in his exertions to repair the disaster. An eye-witness has termed his conduct "sublime," * as he rode up and down and among the wounded and stragglers, turning back to their duty all who could bear a weapon, whilst using (as has ever been his wont) rather the tenderness of a parent than the sternness of a general. His words of encouragement were rarely thrown away; the wounded stopped to cheer their beloved chief; and the groups of loiterers seeking the rear for some trifling hurt, turned back to seek their forsaken colours, and to stand or die with 'Uncle Robert.' The unusual gloom which had clouded the chief's brow that morning, and told of his anxiety, seemed now to have passed away; and all who looked on him recognized the calm serenity of a hero equal to the crisis of the hour. While he thus cheered the soldiery; to his officers—as to Wilcox, who was shedding tears over the flight of his brigade—he spoke of his own mistake as the cause of the defeat, and forbade them to blame the men who had given way under such odds.

* Colonel Fremantle, whose admirable narrative is an essential part of the materials of this history.

Such high moral courage, such nobility of conduct, were not thrown away, and all ranks strove to prepare for the threatened shock. The Federal skirmishers had crept thickly forward into the valley: their bullets whistled among the undaunted gunners of Longstreet's batteries; and for two anxious hours the Confederates looked to see the dense line of blue which the Federal works could not hide, break forth in columns of attack—columns which would naturally be directed on their left as the point at which disordered troops would be encountered, and which commanded the line of retreat of the whole army. But darkness began to gather over the blood-stained field, and no further movement came. Only Kilpatrick with one of his brigades of cavalry made a partial advance from the extreme left of the Northern position: but it ended in his leading squadrons, belonging to a Vermont regiment, being almost destroyed by an ambushed party of Hood's men; whilst Farnsworth, the brigadier who led them, was left amongst the dead. Gregg, on the far right flank, supported by Kilpatrick's other brigade under Custer (which had missed their own division commander by some error), before noon beat back the Confederates opposed to him under Hampton (who, like so many of Lee's generals on this disastrous day, was severely wounded); as he also repelled a second

demonstration which was made later in the day. But one of his raw regiments from Michigan had been smitten by a panic, and he did not attempt any decided advance. Buford's division had been so severely handled on the 1st, that it remained far in the rear during the two succeeding days.

The Federal infantry rested motionless in their lines until night came to declare the battle done. It is not to be supposed that Meade was ignorant of the mighty effect which a successful seizing of the offensive would have wrought. To have separated Lee from a part of his train, and compelled him to fall back towards the Susquehanna after a decisive defeat, so that his retreat could have only been made by the circuitous routes of Shippensburg and Carlisle, would not only have forced him to leave his line exposed to the troops at Harrisburg, but would have left Meade by at least two days' march the nearer to the vital point of Hagerstown, through which the Confederates must pass to recover their passage into Virginia. That place occupied and held before them, Lee would almost certainly be forced at any cost to become the assailant in a new battle, to be fought this time against an army just flushed with victory, and with its wants supplied from adjacent and convenient depôts. Or, if that were thought to be too bold a

step, the time gained might be employed in posting the Federal forces in the western slope of the South Mountain, so as effectually to threaten the road up the Cumberland Valley, and to render it nearly impossible for the Confederates to remove their booty by it. To obtain such results as these, and decisively to cripple the enemy, who were now simply repulsed, might be counted as the certain effect of any attack upon Longstreet made *with success sufficient to throw back Lee's right a short mile*, and to occupy the roads leading from Gettysburg towards Chambersburg, by which the great bulk of the Confederates had advanced. Meade was fully aware of this, having most accurate information of the *locale* from Pennsylvanians about him; and to some other of the Federal generals the temptation to make the victory decisive of the war, by a vigorous onset on the discouraged enemy, might have proved a personal temptation too great to resist. On the other hand, the dangers of failure were to be weighed. A part only of the troops of the Federal line, and that the most shattered, could be advanced for the required purpose: nor were there any reserves in hand to add to Hancock's late command, except a single brigade of the 6th corps; the rest having been gradually sent up to the threatened portions of the front. Ewell was still too

active before the Cemetery to allow it to be stripped of its defenders; and if the left of the Federals made the onset alone, it could only be by forsaking the shelter of the well-posted batteries to which Meade owed so much, and by daring the full force of those which the Confederates purposely displayed opposite them in formidable strength. To this show, and the firm conduct of Longstreet's gunners under Major Walton, the caution of the enemy was generally ascribed by the Southerners. But a still more important cause for it was known to few but Meade's own staff, and lay in the want of small-arm ammunition, the reserves of which as yet upon the ground had ill supplied the drain of the last two days; for, in accordance with an evil custom, the reckless expenditure of the Federal skirmishers in idle firing on their distant enemy had gone on almost unchecked. Each brigadier drawing his supplies direct and unquestioned, would usually find it easier—certainly more popular—to replenish his men's pouches than to keep them from wasting the contents; and hence arose such a waste as has perhaps been never witnessed of that very* material

* Those who may doubt this general assertion will find its correctness amply proved by the correspondence of Wellington. His small-arm reserves seem to have been the first object of care in all the great movements of which we have his detailed arrangements recorded.

which it costs a general most trouble and forethought to keep ready to his hand.

This latter want would have turned the scale in favour of caution, if Meade had ever seriously thought of changing the nature of his battle. But this he does not appear to have done at any time. No doubt he was well aware of the axiom of theorists that "a purely defensive battle is an error in itself;" and we may suppose that a mind so cool and thoughtful in its tone must have foreseen the day when he would have to bear the reproach of neglecting to use his victory to the full. But, on the other hand, his present advantage was already gained and sure beyond all risk. Holding the strategical key of the country, for the possession of which the battle had been fought, and having foiled utterly the endeavour of Lee to wrest it from him, it was evident that the latter, unable any longer to subsist his army by dispersing it, must seek safety by immediate retreat from hostile ground. To remain fixed for a while was therefore sufficient for the winning of the campaign; while it would give the opportunity of drawing from Washington and Baltimore those supplies without which the pursuit of Lee could scarcely be conducted with efficiency. Nearly 23,000 of the Federals —considerably more than one-fourth their numbers—

had been placed *hors de combat* by the results of the three days' strife; and the rest had suffered much from exertion, heat, and scanty supplies of water. To have thrown them forward in their turn to encounter perhaps such a repulse as might wipe away all the fruits of their victory—to enter into this new battle without reserves and short of ammunition—would have been a doubtful measure with any army in that sultry July heat. That Meade did not attempt it, we believe may be fairly ascribed, partly to the steadfast character of the man, who, feeling that he had already saved the North, would not risk the undoing of his work for any uncertain gain; partly to his sound measure of the worth of his troops, and of the exact length to which their endurance might be tested.

To criticise the conduct of the victor in this great battle, is, in fact, but to re-examine the question just discussed. Meade's tactical dispositions for the defence of his position seem to have been of as excellent an order as his materials allowed. Unless we insist upon his responsibility for the effect of the blunder of Sickles, or, to be more nice, point out that the extreme weakening of the right on the afternoon of the 2nd might, *had Ewell been aware of it at the time*, have led to a serious attack upon the

exposed point by three divisions instead of one, it is hard to find fault with any show of reason. The remarkable uselessness of his cavalry, both before and after the arrival of their old opponent Stuart, belongs to the general subject of the deficiencies of that branch of the American armies, which it is purposed to consider hereafter separately.

The vices of the Confederate dispositions for the battle have been freely acknowledged by themselves since its loss, and need not be dilated on at any great length. Longstreet himself epitomized them at the time,* when he said that "the army should have been more concentrated, and the attack [of the 3rd] have been made with 30,000 instead of 15,000 men." And when we look more particularly into details, and observe that the Federal left centre was entered indeed on the 2nd, but by two brigades merely without support; and on the 3rd, but only by a single division, the weakest in the army, which remained isolated after its gallant effort; we see plainly the evil effect of the dissemination of the assailants along a line so long that they were in no decisive force at the critical point. This error may be traced throughout the battle of the 2nd and 3rd as giving the key to their failure in other parts, as well as

* *See* Colonel Fremantle's narrative.

when the main attack was made. Thus we find two of Ewell's divisions making useless efforts along the whole front of the Cemetery, whilst the third (Johnson's) possesses itself for a time of the position on the enemy's right flank, but acts in so unsupported a manner as to be driven out as soon as the Federals turn their attention to it. It should be noted as a less direct consequence of this vital mistake of the over-extension of the line, that the impulse of the victory over Reynolds was greatly thrown away by the tedious delay of the preparations for the attack on the 2nd, and that the many hours then lost were lost chiefly in carrying out the development of Ewell's corps beyond that flank of the enemy against which the main assaults were not to be directed. Much time clearly would have been saved had Hill and Longstreet been massed to advance against the Federal left, and Ewell held about Gettysburg as a reserve: and since we know that Meade actually used the troops from the right down to a single brigade to support the threatened flank, it is clear that the Confederates might have advanced in much greater force *against just the same line* which repelled Anderson and Longstreet (for that part of Ewell's troops which held the town would have been sufficient to occupy Howard), and that by noon or even earlier;

so that an advantage obtained, there would have been daylight left to improve it.

These reflections are obvious after the event, and upon full knowledge of the circumstances of each side. Indeed, as before said, their own errors have been admitted by the Southern officers, and their chief has taken on himself the whole weight of the responsibility. But if we allow that Lee showed a temper too easy for the perfection of his office, in letting his judgment be swayed to fighting a somewhat rash battle, and that in such a form as to increase its perils; we must look deeper for the real springs of the defeat which so shook the Confederate cause. Their previous victories over the army of the Potomac under incompetent generals; the great advantage which early and constant acquaintance with the use of the rifle gave the hunters of the South over the citizens of the North in all the opening conflicts of the war; the just *prestige* of their tried leaders; had conduced to give all ranks in the Confederate army a dangerous and unfounded contempt for the fighting qualities of their foe. It needed Gettysburg to dispel this illusion. With many faults, the troops of the Union want but a proper supply of regimental officers to be most formidable to any opponent; and fighting on the defensive, in a posi-

tion capable of being readily strengthened by rough means, there are few which should be less lightly encountered.

As Stuart, with his main force, did not rejoin the army of Lee in a fit state to share in the action, and the battle was deliberately entered on by the Confederates in his absence, it seems desirable to inquire into the special causes which had made cavalry of so little account at this period of the war, that one army was ready to fight entirely without that arm, and the other, counting possibly nearly 10,000 sabres, should have made no practical use of such a superiority in it. It is not enough in the presence of such a disproportion, to say that the battle-ground was generally unfavourable to the manœuvres of horse, for this was less the case at Gettysburg than at the former great encounters of the war. Kilpatrick and Gregg were not separated from the Confederate flanks by obstacles almost impassable, as Stuart from Franklin's corps at Fredericksburg; nor were they blinded by being enveloped in thickets in each direction, as were Pleasanton and his opponent at Chancellorsville. But, in plain fact, their arm of the service was but following what had become the practice of the cavalry on either side, in avoiding any attempt to take their place in the general line of battle, or even to keep

near enough to influence its results. The causes of this conduct are greatly chargeable to the very inefficient training of the individual troopers and their want of unity in movement—difficulties which no officer of either army has ever succeeded in overcoming. But it is probably as much from the nature of the country as from defective discipline, that this arm has in both armies been of very little service in the greater actions: and from feeling, under such circumstances, the hopelessness of any bold attack made on infantry, even though disordered, the cavalry generals have allowed their squadrons to take up a desultory skirmishing mode of fighting, most detrimental to their usefulness, and likely to be confirmed into an evil tradition. Such was once the custom in European armies, until Frederick the Great broke through it, and introduced one of the greatest of modern tactical improvements, by compelling his cavalry to charge the enemy at a gallop, and use their swords rather than their fire-arms. Another such a disciplinarian, backed by power of despotic nature, is needed to revise the system in America, before the Northern or Southern horse (for Stuart himself, invaluable on outpost duties, has in this matter failed as much as other leaders) can emerge from the contempt into which they have fallen.

As a direct result of their shortcomings in the most important duties of modern cavalry, the completing of the victory prepared, or partially won, by the infantry and artillery, we find the most decisive defeats of the war so ill followed up as to be robbed of great part of their expected fruits. M'Clellan was as unable to press his first advantage at South Mountain, and Meade his victory at Gettysburg, as Johnston and Lee their brilliant successes at Bull's Run and Manasses. That the same cause would in Europe be followed by a like unfinished result is well known to the critical reader of Napoleon's campaigns. Engaging suddenly, in 1813, in his desperate struggle in Germany against the Allies, that great general—stripped by his Russian disaster of the famous squadrons of Murat—entered on his campaign without awaiting the dragoons who were to be brought from Spain or created in France; and as a consequence of this special deficiency, saw the two great victories of Lutzen and Bautzen prove fruitless for the destruction or dispersal of the Russo-Prussian army. Ten thousand horse to have completed his advantage at the former might have spared him an indecisive campaign, chained Austria to her timid policy of neutrality, and arrested the tide which was sweeping him to ruin.

Hopeless of any such stroke as those by which Kellerman decided the day at Marengo, and Murat at Dresden, the American commanders have ceased to count upon their horse for any service in the shock of battle, or the movements following their general engagements. The tendency of the campaigns is more and more to divide the operations of the army proper from those of the cavalry, and to use the latter as an independent corps acting at a distance from the others against the enemy's communications and supplies. Hence a constant repetition of the raids of Stuart by less able commanders; hence the idle threatening of the works of Richmond by Stoneman, Kilpatrick, Sheridan, and of the interior of the Border Union States by Morgan and Forrest; hence a constant deterioration of the qualities of the troopers, whose value has become but that of a party of mounted infantry, and whose tactics are reduced to plunder and destruction. From this system of the leaders, combined with extraordinary carelessness on the soldiers' part as to their trooper duties, has arisen such a waste of horseflesh as the world has seldom witnessed until now. The Southern cavalry has been so reduced in consequence, as at times to be insufficient for the needful outposts of Lee's army; whilst the expenditure for horses on the other side is adding

a large item to the huge debt of the Federals; and the constant drain of animals for the service has already threatened (without influencing in any serious degree the course of the war) to exhaust the whole supply of the Northern States.*

Returning from this digression to the narrative of events, it remains only to observe that the morning of July 4th found the exhausted armies motionless on the ground where they had passed the night. Not all the elation with which the dawn of the national anniversary might have inspired Meade, in his position as victor, could tempt him from observing the cautious policy which he had chosen. Lee, on his part, was now relieved from the anxieties of the eve, for his troops had to a wonderful degree recovered their spirits. But his situation was, as before pointed out, utterly untenable for strategical reasons, to which was now added an alarming shortness of ammunition. It remained therefore only to retreat as securely as might be from Gettysburg; to abandon finally the scheme of invasion; and to surrender to his opponent the honours of a battle, which for influence on a great war, and individual interest, deserves as close a study as many of those famed in European annals.

* General Halleck has lately stated in an official report to Congress that, from May to October, 1863, 35,078 horses were issued to an average of 12,000 cavalry soldiers in the army of the Potomac; *i. e.*, three horses nearly per man in six months!

CHAPTER IV.

LEE'S RETREAT TO THE RAPIDAN.

No stronger proof can be given of the extreme confidence of the Confederate generals in the quality of their troops than the wish well known to have been felt by Lee and his chief officers, on the 4th of July, that the enemy might celebrate the day by attempting the counter attack which they had somewhat dreaded the night before. The reserve ammunition had been so carefully husbanded, that enough remained for another day's action; and it was now hoped that the opportunity might be given for such a repulse of the Federals as should leave them but little cause to boast of their victory. But Meade's intentions were of a more cautious cast than his enemy desired. Theoretically, indeed, the position of the Confederates was doubly weak from its great length, and from the fact that, contrary to just rule, the line of retreat ran only from one

flank, and was almost parallel to the general front of the army. Such was the precise case with the unhappy army of King Joseph when forced to fight at Vittoria, where this defect proved their absolute ruin in Wellington's skilful hands. Meade was fully aware of the general position of matters, but (as we have before noticed) he had sound reasons for declining any risk; and their weight was doubtless strengthened by the new example he had just seen of the enormous advantage of a defensive position under the peculiar circumstances of American armies fighting on American *terrain*. At midday the clouds, which had succeeded the fierce sun of the three previous days, sent down such torrents of rain as put an end to all thoughts of action on either side, though long before this the Confederate staff had become convinced that their opponent had no intention of quitting his position. They judged that Meade was but covering his somewhat shattered state by the fire of a line of skirmishers thrown out into the valley, and that it remained for them only to effect the needful retreat as securely as might be.

Lee's first care was to draw in his distant left; and Ewell's train was hurried, from an early hour of the morning, across the rear of the army, and directed on Fairfield, by the road which runs from

Gettysburg to that place between those to Emmettsburg and Cashtown, and which had therefore lain intermediate between the main columns of the two armies in their double movement of concentration. The road to Cashtown, as being the more secure from Federal cavalry, was devoted to the ammunition waggons and guns; and, as Ewell's rear gradually became cleared, he followed the movement of the train. Hill and Longstreet held their ground throughout the day without any molestation from the enemy, whose troops their exhaustion and the bad weather kept so quiescent, that the more sanguine Confederates believed them to be retreating on Baltimore. On the other hand, the firm front of these two corps, and the steady manner in which they proceeded with the sad duties to the dead and wounded on their own side of the valley, so far imposed on Meade as to cause him to believe that Lee was deliberately taking up a new and more concentrated position, running north and south along the hills at the extremity of his former line. But whilst he was thus held motionless, the Confederate troops were under orders to break up from their camping grounds at nightfall, and march by successive divisions on Fairfield. The road, which thus became the main line of retreat, imperfect at the

best, was much cut up by the waggons which had covered it all day; and the rain and mud rendered the march of the army unusually toilsome and slow, so that the short night had passed away before the rear of the column had left the vicinity of Gettysburg.

The movement once discovered, Meade prepared to pursue, but so slowly, that it might be supposed he dreaded to overtake his formidable foe. The more natural solution of this apparent want of vigour is to be found in the general difficulty which all American commanders labour under in the immobility of their troops at the close of a general action. To place the soldiers of the Confederacy, or the Union, so that they will fight well under cover, is abundantly proved to be easy. To lead them on to charges as desperate as ever French or British infantry have dared, has been found far from impossible; but to win first a victory, and then press on his men to reap its full fruits by an unremitting pursuit of the vanquished, is what neither Lee nor any other American general, save Jackson only, has succeeded in doing. Prone as our critics are to seize upon the shortcomings of the trans-Atlantic soldiery, it would be well for them to remember that this very slackness in the following up of victory is just what

continental writers have charged—and not without fair grounds—against the glorious Peninsular army of Wellington. Blucher and Napoleon seem to be the only modern commanders who could so carry their men with them as to completely finish in the pursuit what the battle had begun.

Hampered by this difficulty, Meade, on the 5th, commenced to follow the enemy with the 6th corps only, which had been the least engaged of his army; and Sedgwick's march was so slow, that he barely came up with the rearguard ten miles from Gettysburg, as it was entering the mountain pass near Fairfield. The skirmish that followed was of the most trifling character; and Sedgwick, having lost a staff officer and a few men, fell back to report to his chief the strength of the position on the sides of the gap, which it would take, he thought, the whole army to carry in face of a few thousands of Lee's troops. This opinion was well justified by the South Mountain affair in the previous September; for the pass at Boonesborough was scarcely so strong as that now examined. Meade, therefore, made no further attempt to follow the Confederates, beyond observing their rearguard with a single brigade and some cavalry; but resolved to force them from the line of the hills by a flank movement through the

openings further to the south, which M'Clellan had used the year before. On the 7th, therefore, he broke up from his position, having now refreshed his men and taken care of the wounded—thousands of whom,* of both sides, had of necessity been left by Lee in the retreat, and added to those already under Federal treatment—and marched in two columns on the village of Middletown, lying about eight miles westward of Frederic, and the nearest point to the Pass of Boonesborough (called Turner's Gap), where the army could concentrate on the east side of the South Mountain chain. Sedgwick, with the 1st, 3rd, and 6th corps (or right wing), followed by Howard with the centre (1st and 11th), advanced by Emmettsburg and Mechanicstown, skirting at first, and then crossing the low range called the Catoctin Mountain—an outlying branch of the main hills—which runs parallel to them just westward of Frederic. Slocum proceeded by the other side of the Monocacy with the remaining two corps (2nd and 12th), forming a left wing, and, passing through Frederic, joined the rest of the army at Middletown,

As late as the 15th August, there were 7,262 Confederate wounded in the Federal hospitals. The greater part of these, and of those of the 1st and 11th Federal corps (4,319 of whom were still under treatment at that date), were found in and about Gettysburg. *Vide* "Report of Sanitary Commission."

about which place the whole of Meade's army was concentrated on the 8th, and preparing to advance in the direction of Antietam Creek.

Meanwhile, Lee's retreat had been conducted in tolerable security; for the cavalry of the Federals, though displaying considerable activity, had failed to interrupt it to any serious extent. Of their generals, Kilpatrick showed the most abilty. Having been despatched by Meade on the 4th to observe the roads towards South Mountain, and getting wind of the movement of the Confederate trains through Fairfield, he ascended the hills some miles further to the southward; and, taking a cross route at night, came before daylight into the vicinity of Ewell's convoy, capturing some hundreds of waggons. One of the Federal regiments, indeed, gained for a time the head of the long column, and attempted to turn the whole off their line of march on Hagerstown. But the confusion among the intercepted was scarcely greater than that of the pursuers, many of whom gave themselves up to plunder; and in the end, Stuart's cavalry, who were guarding the train, recovered most of the prisoners and all but 100 of the waggons, some of which had been burnt. On the three following days there were skirmishes in the vicinity of Hagerstown and of Williamsport, at

which latter place the trains were to reach the river. But although Kilpatrick was now joined by a brigade of Buford's division, the irregular tactics of their troopers failed to make any impression on the covering line held by Stuart, who, in the chief of these affairs (that of the 6th), gave the Federals a serious check. Lee's march continued uninterrupted, and on the 7th his army was assembled at Hagerstown; but the heavy rains which had delayed them on the way had also swollen the Potomac—a stream extremely variable in depth—to a height unusual in time of summer, and had made the fords unavailable for crossing. In anticipation of some such event, and to secure the quick passage of supplies, a pontoon bridge had been some time before established by Lee's orders at Falling Waters, four miles below Williamsport; but this had just been destroyed by the activity of General French, who, having been left in charge of the troops on the lower Potomac, had re-occupied Harper's Ferry, and sent detachments up the stream to disturb the rear of the enemy, then near Gettysburg. Captain Dahlgren—noted not long after for the rash attempt upon Richmond, which cost him his life—was particularly conspicuous in this service; and the interruption of the Confederate communications was for a few

hours made complete by General Buford, who had moved in advance of Meade by Frederic, and occupied Williamsport on the 7th, retiring, however, as Lee drew near it.

The latter appeared now to be in a somewhat precarious position. His bridges destroyed, it must take him some time to renew them and to pass over his heavy trains, which counted 3,000 waggons in their length. To cover the latter he had an army considerably reduced below the number which Meade was bringing against him; whilst approaching by the Cumberland Valley from Harrisburg were a body of the new levies, led by an active officer temporarily placed under Couch — General W. F. Smith *—who, with M'Clellan, had already done good service in the field. These were vaguely reported at 20,000; and although their number was immensely exaggerated, it was sufficient to hem the Confederate detachments in towards the north, whilst Meade was collecting his army to the east, and the swollen Potomac lay round to the west and south.

* This General Smith—distinguished among the Federal troops from others of the same name by the appellation of 'Baldy'—is the same who commanded a corps at Fredericksburg. An engineer by profession, he had, like Meade, left his own department for a volunteer command, and had risen rapidly in the army of the Potomac until his health gave way in the previous winter. Both M'Clellan and Grant have expressed a very high opinion of him.

The army of Virginia had, indeed, more reason to be depressed at this time than at any other period of its existence. Beaten beyond denial, and forced to abandon the fertile country which they had but lately entered in pride, to seek refuge in the wasted territory of the Confederacy—the enemy at hand, gathering supplies and recruits, while none could be gained from the southern side of the river—the very elements seeming to conspire against the safety of the retreat; Lee and his troops had but little comfort but their reciprocal trust in each other's firmness, and their faith in the goodness of their cause. And there were grave reasons for the gloom of the Confederates beyond those which concerned their own immediate prospects. Rumours of evil poured in on the defeated army from all quarters. Pemberton, after a defence of Vicksburg, so prolonged and desperate as to redeem the errors he had committed in the first advance of Grant, was compelled, in sheer destitution of ammunition and provisions, to accept the terms offered by the latter general, who had so skilfully arranged matters that the capitulation was completed on the national anniversary, the 4th July. To this tremendous blow in the Mississippi States was added the intelligence of disaster to the Confederate cause in those of the

centre. Here a raid of more daring character than the usual border incursions, made by the semi-guerilla chieftain, Morgan, through Northern Kentucky into Ohio, had been checked at its very outset by the Unionists of the former State so decisively as to presage its utter failure, which occurred soon after by the dispersal and capture of the invaders. But Lee had, besides these strokes of misfortune to his cause, to bear a trial of a more deep and personal nature. At Hagerstown he first learnt that his loved son, William F. Lee, who has been mentioned as badly wounded near Beverley in June, was now in a Federal prison, and his life in danger. A party of the enemy's horse, under Colonel Spears,* had left Whitehouse on the Pamunkey on the 25th June, and penetrated up the river for about thirty miles, ostensibly with the design of reaching and destroying the railroads about Hanover, but more probably with that of capturing the well-known brigadier, who,

Colonel Spears (whose regiment formed part of Keyes's force) received a brigadier's commission for this service; but his exaltation in rank only served to increase the violence and rapacity with which he had already treated the wretched Virginians who were within reach of the cavalry of the York River command. His oppressive conduct appears to have brought him under the notice of Halleck, when the latter set himself vigorously to purge the Federal army in 1864; and it is understood that, although his prosecution before a court-martial failed on technical grounds, he was ignominiously dismissed the service by the President.

they had ascertained, was lying at a country-house near that place. Though as yet very partially recovered, he was carried off, and soon after sent to Washington; and threats were held out as to his life being forfeited if the Richmond Government should carry out the purpose they had announced of retaliating on two of their prisoners for the execution by Burnside (under pretences by President Davis held illegal) of two Confederate captains lately taken in rear of the Federal forces in Kentucky, now placed, with the whole department of the Ohio, under that unscrupulous commander.

Unmoved by all his burden of public and private cares, Lee lost neither the cool judgment on which his army relied, nor the unruffled sweetness of temper which had made him the idol of those about him. His first care was to select a position which might be held long enough for the re-forming of bridges and the passage of his stores; and as these operations, to be secured in tranquillity, must be concealed as far as possible, he decided on retiring beyond the old battle-field of Antietam to the ground in front of Williamsport, near which place the fords would be available as soon as the floods in any degree subsided. Here a position had been previously reconnoitred which seemed completely suited

to his purpose; and to this the Confederate army and its trains moved on from Hagerstown, and occupied it on the 9th. The line, running nearly north and south, was about seven miles long—too extensive somewhat for the diminished force which held it. But this defect had a necessary consequence of the flanks being thrown out so as to cover Williamsport with the left, and to enclose Falling Waters on the right. A small brook running through swampy land towards the latter place gave a good front, behind which swells of land rose high enough for effective artillery fire, and also for concealing the ground in the rear towards the river. Once arrived within the position, the Confederate infantry were employed throwing up earthworks to strengthen its weaker points, and insure its being held if the river should continue impassable. Meanwhile, Lee's engineers were busily employed in restoring the pontoon bridge at Falling Waters, a part of which having floated to the Southern bank had escaped destruction, while the rest was made up of rough boats built hastily at Williamsport.

Meanwhile, Meade continued his advance in a manner so cautious as to justify the Confederate opinion that the conflict of Gettysburg had for the time shaken his army no less than their own. We

have seen that he kept the South Mountain between himself and his enemy in his movement from the battle-field to Middletown; and although his numerous cavalry, in their skirmishes on the other side, had discovered that Lee chose to occupy none of the passes (for that chief was intent on keeping his army together, and avoided any detachments which might give opportunities for straggling), the Federals made no attempt to seize any but those near Boonesborough, which were already held by some of French's men before Meade drew near them on the 9th. On the morrow his army crossed the mountain, the centre and right by Turner's Gap (passing over the scene of D. Hill's bold stand against M'Clellan the year before), and the left by Burkettsville and Crampton's Gap. Head-quarters were established close to Antietam Creek at the same time: but they moved no further for the next three days; for Meade found the same difficulty in clearing his army from the spurs of the mountain which M'Clellan had experienced before him. Slowly, as then, they were pushed through the deep-cut roads which conduct from the hills (here called Elk Mountain) to the now historic stream; and with not less deliberation brought across it, and formed on the other side, in line facing to the westward, and occupying ground just beyond the

position so skilfully held the year before, against mighty odds, by Lee. That general went on with the intrenchments, which were covering his front, and some soreness was naturally felt among the Federals at his having been allowed so much time to strengthen himself; for their army had occupied four days in the advance of twenty miles. The secret of this extraordinary deliberation lay, doubtless, in Meade's resolve not to risk the success already won by any act of rashness. He judged that Lee might not improbably be looking anxiously for some imprudence on the Federal side, of which to take advantage by a sudden onslaught. His own accounts of the Confederate condition differed widely from the reports of their "routed and demoralized" state which were tickling the ears of the Northern citizen; and the sharp blow dealt on Reynolds not many days before had given him natural mistrust of the effect of any isolated use of his corps in too hasty an advance. Some thought there was of forcing up the troops in the rear, and making a general attack on the 12th; but Meade consulted his corps commanders on the subject, and the majority were opposed to this haste. Such is usually the case with councils of war; and the fact, which has passed into a proverb, admits of easy explanation. Few officers holding a subordinate

place will take the responsibility of urging their chief to do *that which he evidently doubts to be wise*, and the failure of which may compromise the army and attach discredit to those who advised it. Hence these meetings almost infallibly incline to the safer course, and that often with unanimity of opinion. On this occasion some of Meade's subalterns—two, at the least, it is said—were for immediately attacking Lee with the troops in hand, before his position could be further strengthened. But one of these only (Howard) had experience and service to give him weight in the council; and the opposite view was supported by the obvious arguments that reinforcements might be daily expected (Couch's advance of 4,000 men, led by that able officer, General W. F. Smith, was just arriving at the time), and that Lee might possibly be tempted, if he found himself unassailed, to take the offensive. The Confederate general had, indeed, skilfully covered his real intentions, by orders to his army so worded as to lead them to expect an advance, and intended to convey this impression to the enemy, whose advance found a copy of them at Hagerstown,* and who might reasonably expect such a movement on

This device seems to have been adopted on other occasions in the army of Virginia—as at Chancellorsville, where Hooker was misled by such captured orders.

his part, as an attempt to free himself from a situation daily more embarrassing. The result of the deliberation, therefore, was to defer the attack until the whole of the Federal forces were fairly placed in line, including the Pennsylvanian levies which Smith was bringing upon the ground: meanwhile, the troops were set to throw up counter-intrenchments to those of Lee, at the distance of a mile from the Confederate lines.

On the 13th, according to Meade's own report, his preparations were at last completed, and the resolve formed to attempt the assault next day. But morning came and found the Confederates vanishing, and the opportunity gone by. Lee had ascertained the day before that the river had so far fallen at Williamsport as to be fordable, whilst the bridge behind its right, and its approaches, were perfectly prepared. Anxious not to run any further risk of being divided from his supplies by the capricious stream, he directed a general retreat that night, which was begun at dusk. Ewell, on the left, fell back on Williamsport, and forded the river with but little loss. Longstreet and Hill moved by the bridge at Falling Waters, where most of the train had already passed, or been ferried over before its construction. But one passage was barely sufficient for such a mass of men and guns as

these generals led. The sky being dark and rainy, there was much delay, confusion, and straggling through the night-hours, as the divisions converged upon the point of crossing; and midday on the 14th was more than passed before the whole of the troops had reached the south side of the stream. Their passage was molested only by the enemy's cavalry, for Meade, who had made up his mind (as already stated) to venture an attack that day,* had yet no infantry on the ground at noon, though his cavalry videttes, scarce five miles off, had reported the movement of the enemy before daybreak to Kilpatrick, their immediate commander. It is impossible to excuse or account for such extraordinary slowness, except on the supposition (which prevailed in the Federal camp at the time) that Meade refused to believe that the enemy were actually retreating, and supposed the withdrawal of their left, which at dawn became plainly visible, to be due to some movement of concentration. Whilst he, thus deceived, held his army on the defensive, Hill and Longstreet gained the time needful for their march; which otherwise the delay caused by the badness of the weather—for

* See his official report. But it is remarkable that this document was not prepared for nearly three months afterwards. It is dated 1st October!

the guns could with difficulty be drawn through the mud—would have rendered very critical. Kilpatrick proved more forward than his chief, and, without waiting orders, he directed General Custer to lead his brigade towards Williamsport through the enemy's lines. The latter they found wholly deserted; and, pursuing the road to Williamsport, captured a number of stragglers, and overtook the last of Ewell's column as it crossed the stream, causing some loss to the Confederates, as they pressed into the water to escape the shells of a light battery which Custer had brought with him. There being now no doubt as to the enemy's retreat, Kilpatrick, who arrived shortly after, moved on towards Falling Waters, whither he was informed the main body of Lee's army was moving. At 8 A.M. he came in sight of the rearguard of Hill, consisting of Pettigrew's division, posted strongly on a line of hills about a mile from the bridge, which they completely covered from all approach. Their strength being partly concealed by a line of earthworks which had been hastily thrown up, and the troopers excited by their pursuit and the number of prisoners already taken (for a large number of stragglers, with a couple of guns stuck fast in the deep ruts, had been cut off by their advance), the commanding officer of the leading squadron, Major

Weber, of the 6th Michigan Cavalry, gallantly charged into the line with his men. To this piece of daring he fell a sacrifice, with nearly half his command; but in the mêlée which ensued one of the Federal troopers shot General Pettigrew mortally, so that this brave man, who, though sharply wounded in the desperate effort to rally his division at Gettysburg, had never resigned his command, died a few days after at Bunker's Hill, near Winchester, whither he was borne. Kilpatrick found himself unable to shake the position of the Confederates; and though reinforced later in the morning by his second brigade (which, by some strange mismanagement, had failed to follow Custer's as intended), and finally by Buford's division, could do no more than employ some of his men, dismounted as distant skirmishers, against the enemy's line. Hill drew in his troops gradually by echelon, and having crossed the last of them, unmolested by any serious pressure, broke up the bridge about 1 P.M., and that evening abandoned the opposite bank to follow the rest of the army towards Winchester.

Some sharp discussion arose between the Confederate and the Federal authorities respecting this affair, and strong counter-statements were made. The writer has taken much pains to come at the

truth, which he believes to lie between the reports of Generals Meade and Lee. The latter does not seem to have been fully aware of the great number of stragglers who fell into Kilpatrick's hands. The former, nettled somewhat at the facility with which the Southern army had slipped from his front, adopted too readily the extravagant report of his subaltern, which converted the very considerable trophies really taken by the cavalry into the results of an imaginary rout of the enemy's rearguard. Without attending to numerous other evidences, we may cite from Kilpatrick's own letter certain facts: as, that he was held back two hours and a half by the enemy's infantry; that the whole of the firing during this time, and the subsequent falling back of the last of Pettigrew's divisions to the bridge, only cost the Confederates 125 killed; and that there was no attempt to interfere with the destruction of the bridge (which was of as substantial a nature as any made of pontoons could be);—which all tell plainly how matters really went. Surely they are proofs enough that the rearguard of Hill effected their purpose in good order. That they should have been allowed to do so without the presence of any of Meade's infantry, although the retreat of the Confederates was (all reports agree) known in the Federal

lines full four hours before it was completed, is a much more damaging charge against the Northern commander and his staff, than that their cavalry should have failed to accomplish an impossible task.

On the 15th, the retreat of the Confederates was continued through Martinsburg, on the road to Winchester; and, in the course of the next day, the whole army was in the position of Bunker's Hill, between those two places, with the front covered by the river Opequan. On this spot Lee had taken post ten months before, after yielding the territory of Maryland to the pressure of M'Clellan; and, as on that occasion, his men now enjoyed some days of rest. Meade had certainly shown no more activity in the pursuit than his more famed predecessor; and he was now as unwilling as the latter had been to cross into the Shenandoah Valley, and risk an attack on Lee in his chosen lines, with the Potomac in the Federal rear: so the Southern army remained undisturbed, except by a cavalry affair, which occurred on the 18th. General Gregg, detached in Meade's rear some days before, had crossed into Virginia at Harper's Ferry, and had made a cautious advance towards Martinsburg, in the hope of intercepting some part of the Confederate train. He was watched in this movement, and finally attacked sharply at a

place on the road called Kearneysville, by Fitzhugh Lee, who drove the Federals back with heavy loss. Gregg left nearly a third of his command (which numbered less than 900 sabres at this time) upon the ground, and retreated, making no further attempt to approach the front of the enemy.

Whilst Lee thus rested his troops, he for some days appears to have had in view a design of marching suddenly down the Potomac, with the hope of surprising the works before Washington, on the southern bank. There was a strong temptation to make this attempt, in the fact of the forts on Arlington Heights (Lee's own estate in peaceful days) being exceedingly extensive, whilst the garrison of Washington was being drained, not so much for Meade's reinforcement as to check the insurrection in New York. The first attempt to enforce the conscription in that city had produced a violent uprising of the mob against the coloured race, whom the popular outcry denounced as the chief cause of this desperate strife, and the constant demands for recruits wherewith to maintain it. From assaulting, and even murdering the frightened negroes, the rioters had gone on to pillage, and a natural reaction was produced. A temporary suspension of the conscription by the authority of the Governor, aided by the

exertions of the better class, hardly ended the frightful state of things which had made life and property for several days, and especially on the 17th of July, universally insecure.

The Federal Cabinet, considering their very existence threatened, should this defiance of the powers wherewith Congress had armed the President for carrying on the war be continued, lost no time in despatching all their available troops to the scene of disturbance; whilst General Dix, an officer honourably known for the firmness, unmixed with violence, which had marked his administration at Baltimore, was despatched from his new command on the Richmond peninsula to assert the central authority of the Union. For a time, therefore, Washington was open to such a surprise as that meditated by Lee; but the flank march necessary could only be successful if made so swiftly as to give Meade no time for a parallel movement to reinforce his capital, while the Shenandoah continued so swollen in its lower part by the unusual rains, as to threaten great delay in the contemplated passage of it by the Confederates. These considerations were sufficient to cause Lee to abandon his design; and the decision once made, it was an obvious consequence that he should retire from the advanced position on the Maryland frontier,

which was at an inconvenient distance from his sources of supply, and, in his present condition, no menace to the North. The trains of the army, including the large contributions brought by Ewell from Pennsylvania, having been steadily moved forward, he broke up from his position on the 20th of July, and marched up the Shenandoah, having purposely somewhat delayed until some demonstrations had been made towards the Potomac, with a view of occupying the attention of Meade, who was thus ascertained to be moving his forces further down.

That general, although much censured at Washington for permitting Lee's undisturbed escape from Maryland—a mistake which, in Halleck's eyes at least, seems to have almost wiped out the memory of his services in the battle—showed no disposition to tempt fortune by accepting the challenge of the Confederates on their own side of the stream. His pursuit thus far had been so cautious as to appear a strict copy of that of M'Clellan ten months before. Nor were his subsequent proceedings one whit more original; for he selected for his point of passage Berlin, below Harper's Ferry—the same place used for that purpose by his former master—and carrying his army across unopposed, prepared to repeat the Federal manœuvre of the previous October, by

advancing along the eastern skirts of the Blue Mountain, and thus dislodging Lee from the mouth of the valley. But his enemy was already retiring by a parallel line on the other side of the chain, and, having entirely abandoned all offensive designs for the present, was on his way to his old quarters near Orange by the exact route * followed in the advance six weeks before. As the Confederates, in their movement up the Shenandoah, withdrew their cavalry posts from the several gaps they left behind them, it was easy for Meade to occupy them successively without resistance; for he felt this precaution for the protection of his flank from surprise as needful as M'Clellan had done. The road the Federal army chiefly used, as in the autumn before, passes along the Loudon Valley, between the Blue and Bull's Run Mountains. It is of a most indifferent character, and much delayed the advance of the corps; so that when Manasses Gap was reached and entered without opposition, on the 22nd of July, by Buford, with the cavalry advance, the rear of the Confederate column were already approaching Front Royal, on the other side of the pass. Meade, however, being misinformed as to the position of the enemy, hoped that he might yet be in time to cut off the last of their corps; for

* See map at p. 16.

he was aware that Lee's order of march left a considerable interval between each. He pushed on, therefore, to the support of Buford with his nearest corps, the 3rd (now placed under General French), and by a night march gained the Gap, and passed two divisions through it to the western side. In the morning, after a vain attempt to discover by reconnaissances the exact force of the enemy, French advanced his leading division, Birney's (this day under Ward), and drove in a line of Confederate pickets. These, however, only retired on their supports, who held a ridge beyond—one of several in succession which crossed the road as it wound into the valley—and French was compelled to use his second division (Prince's) before he could force his opponents further. Driven from a breastwork by a gallant charge of the Excelsior brigade,* which cost its commander (Spinola) a severe wound, the Confederates fell back on a second, and yet later in the day, a third, position of equal strength, and clung to

* It was the raising of this brigade, in the hot days of the early war, which had given Sickles, a violent politician of New York, by profession a lawyer, his brevet as General of Volunteers. His successor, Spinola, soon after the action here recorded, had charge of the recruiting office at New York, and upon him has been thrown, under an official report from General Dix, the odium of conniving at the fraud and extortion there practised by private agents upon the men enlisted.

each with tenacity. In the afternoon, the staff officers on the hills in rear of the Federals reported a heavy column of the enemy returning from Front Royal to the support of those engaged; on which Meade judged it more prudent to order French to halt for the evening, and give time for the bulk of the army to arrive at the scene of action. Large reinforcements passed the Gap in the night, and were deployed in line of battle by daybreak. But the enemy (who proved to be part of Rodes' division, the rearmost of Ewell's corps and of Lee's whole army,) had withdrawn under cover of the darkness, and were already far beyond Front Royal on their onward march. French pushed his advance to that place at once, but saw nothing of the Confederates, save the cloud of dust which they raised along the road into Chester Gap, through which they were about to follow the main body of their army; and Buford, who was sent forward in pursuit, obtained no more success than is implied in the capture of some dozen stragglers and a herd of sore-footed cattle, the last of the Pennsylvanian spoils.

Meade, in fact, had been completely outwitted. If his conduct in this affair of Wapping Heights (for so the ridges are named) shows a want of the tactical quickness which should have made his great

superiority of force of more avail, so his whole management of the retreat was manifestly slow, and his judgment unequal to fathoming the proceedings of his adversary. Having now been tempted, upon what proved insufficient grounds, to collect a large part of his army on the wrong side of the Blue Mountains, he had to lose another day in bringing them back through the pass; and was altogether too late to interfere with the passage of Lee, who was clearing Chester Gap with his train on his way to the Rappahannock, the day before, whilst his opponent struggled for the possession of that at Manasses. The Confederates, therefore, leisurely took possession of the line along the Rapidan, from which they had originally started. A great part of the waggon train, with the remainder of the contributions levied in the North, had been sent further up the valley so as to cross the ridge by a route more circuitous, but covered from the Federals by the body of the army. Meade did no more than observe the latter, posting his forces in Lee's front, so as to cover Washington, and to secure supplies by the railroad from Alexandria, which for many months after served as his base. Large detachments were at this time made from his strength to increase the garrison which was to aid General Dix in enforcing the obnoxious conscription

in New York; and he was thus perforce reduced to complete inaction. The Confederates, on their part, had great need of repose. A campaign at once so exhausting and so unfortunate as that just closed had seriously imperilled the discipline and reduced the numbers of their army. The energy and authority of both general and president were required to be freely exerted to keep the men to their colours, at a time when their own immediate losses and misfortunes seemed to be reflected by ill news from each part of the Confederacy. Happily for the Southern cause, the abundant supplies lately procured for the army of Virginia were not exhausted until a bounteous harvest was reaped throughout the South; and the soldiers, in their full and regular rations, found an argument, perhaps, as potent as the most eloquent appeal to their loyalty in proclamation or general order. Dearly purchased as was the temporary supply gained in Pennsylvania, its value at the time was immense to Lee's army, and in some measure atoned for the general failure of his invasion.

The vast extent of the losses with which the army of the Potomac in this campaign paid for its one great success has been very completely put on record by Generals Meade and Halleck in their official reports. These documents, it may be observed, are

fully borne out by the independent statement of the Sanitary Commission, who took charge of the hospitals soon after the battle. The Federal killed amounted to 2,834; the wounded to 13,709; and there were 6,643 missing—prisoners chiefly: making a total of 23,186. These numbers have not been disputed to any purpose. The Confederates, indeed, have raised the number of prisoners to 9,000 in certain of their accounts; but this is done by including some of the less severely wounded, who were paroled upon the spot, and left about Gettysburg. Some few hundreds of the above total are due to the cavalry skirmishes which took place before Lee's recrossing; and of the remainder, about one-half (including the greater part of the prisoners) to Reynolds' defeat on the 1st. Lee paroled a number of the prisoners taken that day, to avoid the difficulty of guarding and subsisting them; but 3,000 of them were carried across the Potomac, and sent to Richmond.

It is naturally more difficult to arrive at the exact state of the Confederate loss. The soldier's life in the Southern army is individually of such vital importance to his cause—threatened as it is with annihilation by a powerful and relentless foe, who has vast means of recruiting his forces which are wholly

closed to the Confederacy—that there is a special temptation beyond that always present in war to conceal the extent of a sacrifice made wholly to no purpose. Yet there are not wanting evidences which lead to our rejecting alike the Confederate statement made at the time of Lee's retreat, which pretended that his whole loss on the north of the Potomac would not exceed 15,000, and the more deliberate one put forward afterwards by Halleck, which valued it at 37,000. The truth appears to lie nearer the former than the latter number. The highest estimate of the Confederate dead buried by Meade's troops about Gettysburg is not more than 4,500; for the Federal stories of secret interment by the other side, on the 2nd, are entirely unsupported by evidence. Assuming that 4,000 at the least were actually counted, we may take it for almost certain, according to the usual proportion, that the Confederate wounded in the battle would be not far from 16,000; and this supposition agrees closely with the reports of 11,000 left in the Federal hands, and 5,000 removed by Lee in his retreat. To this loss we must add that of prisoners, of whom Meade claimed 13,621. But his own hospital records show that by far the greater part of these were the wounded already reckoned. Of the actually unhurt, a compa-

rison of his report with the latter documents shows at once that the number was extremely moderate; as might be gathered also from the circumstances of the battle. It amounted probably to about 1,000 taken on the 2nd and 3rd; whilst the retreat cost the Confederates rather more. On the whole, therefore, the army of Virginia recrossed the Potomac, diminished, it would appear, by a total number slightly less than the loss inflicted on Meade's—a result which will not appear surprising when we remember that, of the latter, just one-half is due to the severe defeat of Reynolds and Howard on the 1st, when the Confederates lost but a few hundreds. Could a separate account be struck for the engagements of the 2nd and 3rd, the balance would lie fearfully against the Southerners, as must ever be the case in such unsuccessful assaults as theirs.

It is almost needless to remark that this apparent equality of numbers placed *hors de combat* was as disastrous as novel to the Southern army. Their opponents, indeed, could with truth call their numerical loss a gain of immense importance at such a price. Many of the regiments which had suffered in the Federal side were composed of troops who would before long have claimed their discharge; many others had served but a few months, and their gaps could

easily be filled by the recruits of the year. And such recruits were forthcoming from a population five times as large as that which owned the sway of the Confederacy, irrespective of a large contingent to be drawn from the flowing immigration of the Old World —an aid of much importance, though the proportion of Irishmen and German recruits enlisted at this time has been vastly exaggerated by party writers. On the other hand, the Richmond Government had need of the sternest measures, and its subjects of the most devoted loyalty, in order that Lee and the other generals of the Confederacy might see supplied, from even an inferior standard, the gaps made among their veterans by the disasters of the summer.

In closing this narrative of a most important campaign, it is here sought to make a brief protest against a deduction hastily, and, in the writer's belief, falsely, made from its events by more than one writer of eminence. By such it has been delcared that the Confederate failure at Gettysburg proved conclusively that *it is impossible for a Southern army to maintain itself in the North*. If this be held to mean that a single force, led by Lee or any other general, is inadequate to the permanent conquest of any considerable portion of the hostile States, even if a line were kept open into Virginia by which to receive

supplies of men, such an assertion is, indeed, indisputable. But it should not be forgotten that large districts of the Northern States—as those of the Susquehanna and Hudson—approach in wealth and resources to the well-peopled countries of Europe, in which French and German armies in modern wars have subsisted *for a time, and whilst moving*, without the use of magazines, by a system of requisitions at the cost of the inhabitants. To do this very thing would have been the effort of Lee's army in 1863, after the nearer part of Pennsylvania had been stripped, and its resources transported beyond the Potomac. That the invading force was checked and foiled in the outset has been already shown to have been the direct and single result of a happy piece of strategy on the part of Meade, and of the endurance of his army. But war is often an affair of hours. Had Reynolds been slain and his troops routed earlier on the 1st July—had Lee, even in the afternoon, risked an immediate and decisive attack upon the cemetery as his troops drove the Federals to its shelter—who can say how greatly different would have been the issue? Howard once forced from the hill, the opportunity of uniting his forces would have been lost to Meade. Taken by surprise, and with its corps scattered on separate points of two different

roads, the army of the Potomac must have commenced a disastrous retreat, to end probably only in the intrenchments of Washington, cut off by its opponent from any aid save what should reach the capital by sea.

Even with so large a supposition in his favour, it is not pretended that Lee could have dictated terms to Lincoln. But such a stroke, well followed up, might have inflicted such damage on the foe as to have more than atoned for the loss of Vicksburg, and have rendered the Federal Cabinet impotent to play the despotic part, by which it soon after absorbed the resources of the States for the prosecution of the war. It is possible even, judging from the evidences of the invasion of 1862, that the state of alarm which would have followed another Confederate success as striking as that we have imagined, might have so shaken the weak, self-seeking President of the North, as to have changed his policy, and shaped it towards counsels of moderation and peace.

That such thoughts lay in the breast of Jefferson Davis—to whose cause peace so won would have brought triumph, and to himself safety and honour—is manifest from the somewhat hasty desire which he showed to use the first advantage won by Lee

to that end. Scarcely had the report of their general's success on the 1st July reached the Cabinet at Richmond, when it was resolved to make an overture to that of Washington, in such form as to prove an earnest desire for the cessation of hostilities. It was the more needful to act without delay, as the last Confederate accounts from Vicksburg told plainly that Pemberton's defence could not long be protracted; and both the President and his advisers hoped that their offer, following on the victory they anticipated in Pennsylvania, and arriving in the midst of the panic consequent on it, would force the Federal ruler to consent to an immediate truce preliminary to further negotiation, and thus leave the balance of arms in their favour.

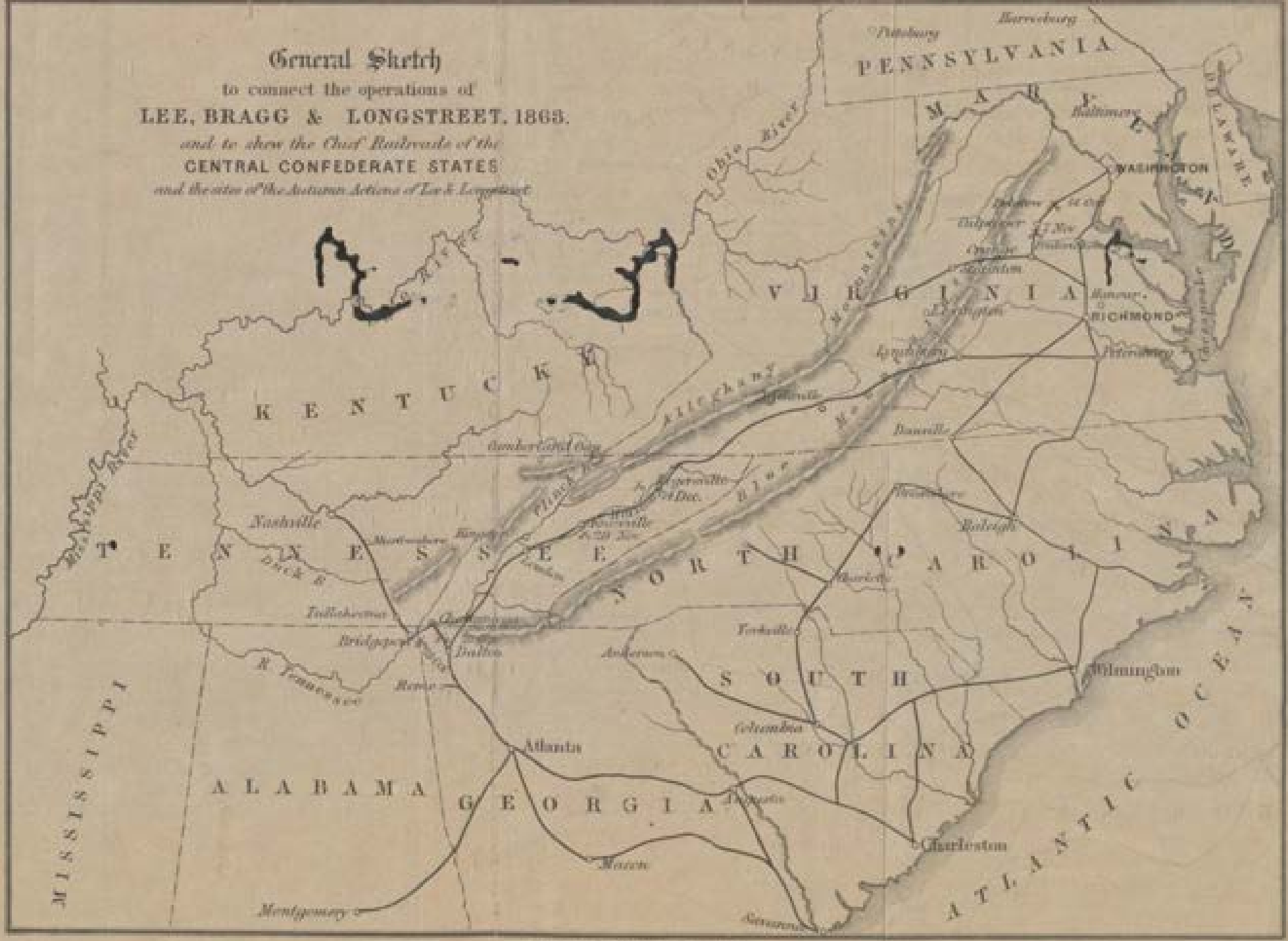
On the morning of the 4th, the blockading Federal squadron, in the lower part of the James, observed a gunboat descending the stream with a flag of truce conspicuously displayed. She bore the Vice-President of the Confederacy, Mr. Stephens, accompanied by Judge Ould, the Confederate commissioner for the exchange of prisoners; and safe conduct was demanded for them of Admiral Lee, in order that they might proceed to Washington, to confer personally with President Lincoln regarding further facilities for the release of prisoners, and

"other measures for mitigating the horrors of the war." The admiral telegraphed to his superior for instructions, and received for reply the intimation that the permission could not be accorded, as the President held that there was sufficient means for communicating their proposals through the usual channel. But this refusal was not sent until Meade had reported to Washington the complete security of his position, and the severity of the enemy's loss in the vain attempts to carry it. Though not yet able to move or to pursue, he assured General Halleck of his certainty that the advantage lay entirely with the army of the Potomac, and that all danger from the invasion was at an end. To this intelligence were added advices from Admiral Porter in the Mississippi, conveying the conviction of that able officer that Vicksburg was near its fall. It is not surprising, therefore, that the impulse of Lincoln, thus forewarned of his coming triumphs, was to repel the advances of his rival with the first official excuse that offered. In doing this, it is believed he met with considerable opposition in his own Cabinet, the members of which had been secretly warned that Stephens had power so far to concede the original demands of the South, as to offer its submission to the nominal sovereignty of the Union, upon condition of their complete in-

ternal and joint independence being secured to the whole body of the Confederate States. An offer so flattering to the pride of the North would have been very difficult, perhaps impossible, for the will of one man to have rejected, had the tide of the last two days' battle at Gettysburg swept the army of Meade into ruin or flight.

Far different was the event. The delay of the evening of the 1st brought union, rest, and strength to the scattered and disheartened Federals. The reinforcements gained by that delay—the deliberate preparations of the 2nd—the presence of his favourite lieutenant—could not restore to Lee the advantage he had missed. His defeat and retreat broke for many a long day the prestige of his army; and, matching too well with the surrender of Pemberton, and the failure of hopes rested on Johnston, spread consternation through the Confederacy and triumph through the North. The moral consequences defy all calculation as to their importance: for the war party were confirmed in their hold on the Federal mind; the conscription was enforced, and filled up the army; the credit of Lincoln's Exchequer was for the time saved from approaching ruin; and the Northern forces enabled to resume the offensive at all points. For a full year after the battle of

Gettysburg, the South, whose hopes of victory and foreign aid had before been raised so high, was condemned to an exhausting, unfriended attitude of defence against the ceaseless attacks of her gigantic foe.


General Sketch
to connect the operations of
LEE, BRAGG & LONGSTREET. 1863.
and to shew the Chief Railroads of the
CENTRAL CONFEDERATE STATES
and the sites of the Autumn Actions of Lee & Longstreet
PENNSYLVANIA
MARYLAND
VIRGINIA
KENTUCKY
TENNESSEE
NORTH CAROLINA
SOUTH CAROLINA
GEORGIA
ALABAMA
MISSISSIPPI
Pittsburg
Harrisburg
Baltimore
WASHINGTON
RICHMOND
Lynchburg
Petersburg
Danville
Raleigh
Wilmington
Charleston
Atlanta
Columbia
Nashville
Chattanooga
Montgomery
Mason
Ohio River
Mississippi River
Cumberland Gap
Bridgeport
Dalton
Rome
Tullahoma
Shelbyville
Murfreesboro
Knoxville
Greensboro
Fayetteville
Florence
Anderson
Augusta
Macon
ATLANTIC OCEAN

CHAPTER V.

LONGSTREET AT CHATTANOOGA.

THE reproaches uttered by General Halleck against Meade, for his slow and indecisive action in pursuit of the army of Virginia, had, as we have seen, but little influence on the operations in the field. More than once Meade's answers implied that he might be forced to resign his command, but would not be driven into any course which his judgment held rash. With the arrival of Lee in safety at his old quarters, therefore, all hope of obtaining any further decisive advantages over that general was abandoned by Lincoln and his Cabinet; and they had the less scruple in reducing the army of the Potomac largely in order to carry out the conscription, which they had been obliged to postpone at New York. Thirty thousand troops under General Dix occupied that rebellious city early in August, and the obnoxious ballot was enforced without further resistance, in spite of the

strenuous opposition of Governor Seymour and of those who, with him, declared the whole measure unconstitutional, and desired time to prove their opinion in the courts of law.

In addition to this special demand for soldiers, the necessity for whose services against their fellow-citizens lasted only a few weeks, there arose another object at this time to absorb the attention of the War Department. The naval force on the Atlantic coast having failed signally in an open attack, made April 7th, on the forts which protected Charleston, it was resolved, at the instance of Admiral Dahlgren, who had lately succeeded to the command of the fleet, to attempt to open a passage for the ships by means of a co-operating land force. A corps of 15,000 men had been prepared in the early summer, supplied with a vast siege equipment, and despatched to South Carolina under a general (Gillmore) distinguished in the previous year for his skill in reducing the defences at the mouth of the Savannah River. On the 18th July their actual operations began, and for two months were pushed steadily forward, notwithstanding the science of Beauregard and the valour of Taliaferro, who was as distinguished for courage on the sandhills round Fort Wagner as he had been when serving under Jackson's eye on the

wooded slopes of Antietam and Fredericksburg. The show of success which the Federal troops made until Morris Island was totally occupied (7th September), and their works came to a stand-still, riveted on Gillmore's force the attention of the North to a degree that made the army of the Potomac quite secondary for the time, and caused Stanton, as Meade's corps gradually were filled by the conscription, to determine to employ a portion of them in some more active field than that of Eastern Virginia. An urgent need for such a transfer soon arose, and on the 23rd September, the 11th and 12th corps were placed under General Hooker, who was directed to move them through Kentucky and Tennessee to the support of Rosecrans.*

The latter general, who for a twelvemonth past had held the Federal command in Tennessee, was now engaged in a campaign which so considerably affected the forces hitherto engaged in Virginia, as to call for a brief notice in these pages. Checked in his advance southwards from Nashville in the

* General Halleck would appear to lay claim in his report to some special prescience, which led him to detach this force before Rosecrans' defeat at Chickamauga was reported. But from the same report, it appears that no order was actually issued for their departure until the 23rd September, when the disaster and its extent were fully known at Washington! *Vide* his report to the War Secretary for the year 1863.

previous December by the bloody and indecisive battle of Murfreesboro', where he with difficulty maintained his ground against assaults of Bragg so far successful as to cause the rout of the Federal right and the capture of much of the train, Rosecrans had for the six months succeeding remained on Stone River, close to the scene of the contest, in perfect inaction. He had resolved, as appears by his own showing,* not to advance again until so strengthened as to be perfectly certain of success; and Halleck in vain pressed him to invade the south-eastern portion of Tennessee whilst the siege of Vicksburg was in progress, so as to prevent relief being sent to the hard-pressed garrison. There is reason to believe that Rosecrans delayed in hopes to see his immediate opponent, Bragg, so weakened for the purpose of reinforcing General Johnston, as to offer his army an easy conquest. If so, he was disappointed for the time; and it was not until the relief of Vicksburg was considered by both sides almost hopeless, that he put his troops in motion (27th June), being then supplied with a considerable cavalry force which he had demanded as indispensable, and being completely covered on his left towards the Alleghanies

* *See* the correspondence printed by Halleck in his official report of the year's operations.

by a separate invasion of the mountain district of East Tennessee, conducted from Kentucky by Burnside. The latter had for some time held the important charge of the district of Ohio, having won by his conversion to extreme Republican opinions, and his ready shielding of the Government from blame in the affair of Fredericksburg, the special favour of Lincoln, and his own restoration to command. His appointment had been fully justified in the eyes of his party by the vigour (no new quality this in a Republican general, if history speaks the truth,) with which he had crushed a rising constitutional opposition within the peaceful portion of his district, by the arrest and deportation of Vallandigham.

Once begun, the advance of Rosecrans was for a time completely successful. Bragg's army was strongly posted in an intrenched position along the southern bank of Duck River, a considerable stream flowing into the Tennessee; but the Confederates were now reduced by detachments to about 30,000 men; and their opponent, with double that number, found little difficulty in forcing them from their line by deliberate and skilful manœuvres, which entailed no serious fighting. Bragg's second position near Tullahooma, to which he now retired, was similarly turned and abandoned; and in nine days Rosecrans

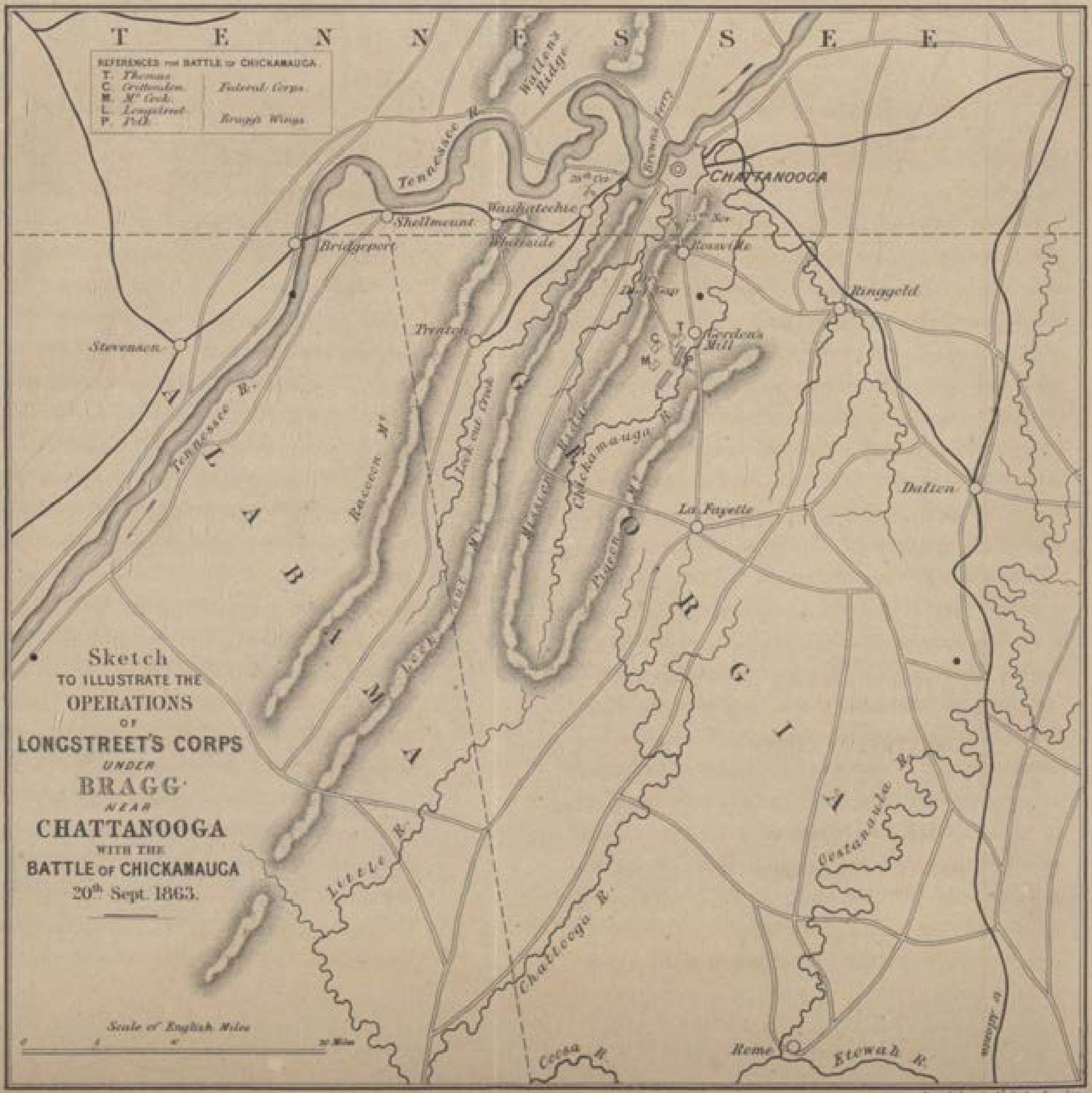
had mastered the whole of Middle Tennessee, and driven his adversary to retire across the river of that name into Georgia. These successes cost the Federals less than 600 men, whilst they captured 1,600 of the enemy; and they were more remarkable as being obtained during weather so stormy as greatly to retard the march of the columns. The rain through the greater part of July affected Rosecrans not less than Lee; for, added to the necessity of consolidating his conquests and completely repairing the railroad from Murfreesboro' to the Tennessee, it caused a suspension of his advance for a full month.

In August his army was again in motion. Bragg now held the southern bank of the river from Chattanooga, where the Georgian railroad reaches the stream, to Bridgeport, twenty-four miles to the west, where it crosses to enter the centre of Tennessee. This district is favourable for defence, being a mass of low mountains, forming the extremity of the Alleghanies, which here run themselves out into the vast plain of the Mississippi. It forms the key of Georgia to an invader from the north, and its importance had been indicated by M'Clellan at the very outset of the war. In possessing himself of it by effecting the passage of his superior force unopposed to any effort by Bragg, General Rosecrans showed

not less ability than before, and, after a series of manœuvres filling a fortnight, the Confederate general retired from Chattanooga towards Central Georgia. The important place thus occupied by the Federals was already intrenched towards the river, but Rosecrans caused works to be thrown up to the south of it also—a precaution to which he greatly owed his safety from destruction not many days later. Burnside, to the east, had not been less successful, having seized without much difficulty the valleys about Knoxville and the passes leading from the Upper Tennessee into North Carolina, and having also by a rapid flank march on Cumberland Gap, the chief Confederate passage into Kentucky, cut off and forced to surrender (September 9th) a body of 2,000 men who were placed there to maintain the post. Halleck had intended to subordinate these operations to those of Rosecrans, and had ordered Burnside to extend his right down the river in the direction of Chattanooga, so as to support and cover the former general in his approach towards the vitals of the Confederacy. But such fine webs of strategy spun at a distance are apt to be rudely broken by causes beyond the control of the designer. Napoleon himself failed signally in the effort to carry on the Peninsular war by personal instructions directed to his individual generals from

his War Office. And Halleck, though favoured by the existence of telegraphs, has not been more happy in the like attempt. Indeed, the same cause will ever interfere with the execution of combined movements by *independent* commanders as long as human nature remains unchanged—viz., the disposition of each chief of an army to exaggerate the importance of his own proceedings, and the consequent unwillingness to make them secondary to those of the co-operating general, in whom perhaps he sees his chief rival. It requires a greatness of self-denial to act otherwise, which is but rarely found in the leaders of men—never in the vulgarly ambitious. Burnside was far from being an exception to the general rule; and though directed in plain terms to connect himself with the posts near Chattanooga, at least by his cavalry, he neglected to do so, and suffered a gap of nearly 100 miles to divide the armies.

In the meanwhile Rosecrans, elated by his recent successes, seems to have concluded that the centre of the Confederacy was so drained of troops as to retain no further means of resistance; and that Bragg, if pressed, must abandon it to retire on Richmond or Charleston. He resolved, therefore, to press forward boldly into Georgia. An advance of 140 miles along the line from Chattanooga would



Published by Smith, Elder & Cº London, 1865.

bring him to Atlanta, the most important railroad junction of the State, and in a much more real sense than any opening of the Mississippi would sever the Confederacy in twain. The conquest of that place, with perhaps an easy victory over the inferior army he was pursuing, would wipe away the reproach of late inaction, and restore the reputation which was fading in the lustre of the new glories of Meade and Grant. Animated by such hopes, and having previously made some partial movements to feel his way, he advanced the main body of his army from its present base near Chattanooga on the 14th September, and plunged into the hilly country beyond towards Lafayette—known chiefly (see map) as Missionary Ridge and Pidgeon Mountain—at the very time when his enemy had halted there to await large reinforcements which were upon the road to his camp. The Richmond Cabinet had now resolved to concentrate at all costs a force sufficient to enable Bragg to assume the offensive, and crush this new invasion, and their strategy proved more successful than that of Halleck; not perhaps that it was in itself devised more ably in theory, but the 'interior lines' they possessed gave means for massing their armies, which were practically and readily available. Having despatched towards

the scene of action part of Johnston's Mississippi army and the surplus of their garrisons in the Southern Atlantic States, they resolved, with Lee's consent, to withdraw for a while from the army of Virginia—now properly recruited and supplied—the whole corps of Longstreet, and to throw it into the scale. There was no thought of repeating the dangerous experiment of crossing the Potomac during the remainder of the year; and two-thirds of Lee's forces, under his able direction, were held to be ample for the defence of Richmond against Meade. In the second week of September, therefore, Longstreet moved towards the capital with his corps; and on the 12th they passed rapidly through the city on their southward road. As much probably to deceive the enemy as to assist Beauregard's defence, the half division lately led by Pickett was sent on to Charleston: the other part of the same division (which, it will be remembered, had been much missed at Gettysburg) accompanied M'Laws and Hood on their way to Georgia. The direct line through Lynchburg being stopped by Burnside's occupation of Knoxville, their route was circuitous enough, and it was only on the 19th that the advanced troops—three brigades under General Hood—joined Bragg's army about twenty miles south of Chattanooga. This addition scarcely

made the Confederate commander's force equal to the 60,000 men opposed to him under Rosecrans; but he had discovered that that general was pushing through the wooded defiles in his front in apparent disregard of his proximity to the foe, without any precaution to cover his front and flanks, and with his three corps apart from each other. One of them, Crittenden's, had already on the 12th, in an isolated movement intended apparently for observation, marched almost into the centre of the Confederate camp near Ringgold, and was only safely withdrawn, unconscious of its danger, because one of Bragg's divisions failed by some mischance to carry out his order to seize the pass in the rear of the Federals, through which they had moved the day before. Caution seemed to have been altogether laid aside since the Federals had crossed the Tennessee, and Bragg moved at once to attack them whilst so favourably placed for his purpose. So rapidly, indeed, was his resolve carried out, that his troops advanced —to his own great loss, as it proved—without bringing up such supplies of provisions from the neighbouring depôt at Dalton as might have enabled them to fully follow up the hoped-for success. At this time the Federal 'left' corps, Thomas's (moving on the right of the army from Bridgeport), had crossed Mis-

sionary Ridge slowly to a point twelve miles south of Chattanooga, and reached a point called Gordon's Mills, on the Chickamauga Creek, a small river running chiefly northward along the foot of that range in a steep rocky bed to the Tennessee. 'The centre,' under Crittenden, which had originally occupied Chattanooga, was not so far advanced, having halted near to that place since its late retreat from Bragg's front. M'Cook's corps, the so-called right (which had crossed with Thomas at Bridgeport), was still further to the rear, moving towards its intended position by a circuitous route; for Rosecrans purposed to bring the three together before crossing the Chickamauga. The latter stream, which was only passable for artillery at a few points, covered the whole line of Thomas when the Confederate army—being fully informed of their enemy's dispersion—approached him in the forenoon of the 19th. Bragg's object was to strike at his left and seize the road along the eastern side of the Ridge to Rossville, by which lay Thomas's direct retreat on Chattanooga if forced from his ground; and he hoped to overwhelm this single corps, and gain the left flank and rear of the others successively before Rosecrans could unite them. For this purpose he had moved his army considerably down the stream,

and was now advancing with his line facing nearly westward.

But this design failed as a surprise, his troops having shown themselves so plainly as to excite the full attention of Thomas and Rosecrans; and at 10 A.M. the battle began by an effort of the former to overwhelm a brigade of Confederates (Ector's) which had made the passage of the stream just in his front, in order to support some of Forrest's cavalry who had crossed before them. Brannan's division, which was employed for this purpose, met with unexpected resistance from the Confederates; and Walker, who commanded the right of Bragg's army, reinforced his advanced troops so rapidly, that the engagement became general. Thomas brought up his remaining divisions,* and those of Palmer and Johnson (with one brigade of Sheridan's), which were detached to his assistance from the centre and right successively; but he found all his strength unequal to contend with the assaults of Walker's troops, who were aided by Cheatham's division of Bragg's centre under Polk, flanked by Stewart of Buckner's corps, detached that way. A charge on the Confederate left flank, made by Johnson on arriving, at one time

* His corps (14th) comprised *four* divisions, under General Negley, Brannan, Baird, and J. Reynolds.

restored the Federals the ground they had abandoned; but Hood and his veterans from Virginia, aided by Bushrod Johnson with one of Bragg's old divisions, here took part in the battle, sharply repulsing this counter attack; and at evening Rosecrans found his line driven a mile to the rear of the stream, and the confidence of his men effectually shaken. The storms of July had been succeeded by a protracted drought, and want of water for their exhausted soldiery added to the cares of the Federal commanders, who seem, like their men, to have given too easy credit to flying rumours of the vastness of the reinforcements joining their enemy. Yet their position, at the eastern foot of the steep chain of Missionary Ridge, was of great natural strength; and Thomas, warned by a partly successful attack made after dark by a fresh body of Confederates on Johnson's, his most exposed division, lost no time in throwing up breastworks to cover his line. It was a wise precaution, and, as we shall see, was the chief means of saving from destruction on the succeeding days the whole army of Rosecrans.

The morning of the 20th dawned upon the Federals, weary, disheartened, and suffering greatly from thirst. Bragg had purposed not only to continue his attack of the day before on their left, but to carry it along the line, so as to prevent Thomas

from being further reinforced. Longstreet, who had arrived at nightfall, was to make the chief pressure on the Confederate left, and had for that purpose assigned him the command of the whole wing, which was composed of the sub-corps * (his own men and Bushrod Johnson's) which had been led the first day by Hood, Preston's division (of Buckner's sub-corps), Hindman's, and half that of M'Laws, which had just arrived. In all, therefore, he led three of the western divisions, with portions only of two of his own; for Hood's, like M'Laws', was incomplete. Stewart, with Buckner's second division, was placed in the centre to connect Longstreet's line with the rest of the army.

According to the Confederate plan, Polk, who had charge of the whole right of their army, was to commence the attack at daybreak. Five divisions were placed under him; and his orders were to begin his assault from his extreme right, whither Breckenridge and Cleburne had been moved the night before.

* This phrase seems to have been extensively used in Bragg's army to denote a temporary command of two divisions. Few generals probably were capable of directing more than that strength of such irregular troops as these Western Confederates. The reader will remember that M'Clellan, in the early campaigns of the army of the Potomac, never entrusted his corps commanders with a larger number.

These two generals,* as able as any of their rank, formed a separate command under D. Hill; and this complicated subdivision appears to have produced ill fruit in the event. On which portion of Bragg's staff the blame more especially lay has never been made known; but from some misconception of Polk's, or Hill's (between whom there appears to have been but little cordiality), the first movement was delayed until 9 A.M. The whole battle was of course retarded in proportion, and the Confederates thus, through a single officer's error, lost three or four hours—a loss irreparable in the event, even had it not given the Federals the time necessary to complete their defences.

The opening attack was gallantly made by Breckenridge; but Thomas, with his men well protected by more than one line of breastwork, repulsed it with ease; his first line, under Brannan, capturing General Adams, who fell wounded at the head of the Confederates, and killing Helm, whose brigade was next in support. In vain Polk continued his assault with Walker's divisions (under Gist and Liddell),

* They had reached their divisional rank from the two extremes of society—Breckenridge having been previously to the war one of the leading politicians of the Union, and Cleburne an emigrant who had begun life as a private soldier in the 41st British infantry.

Cleburne's, and Cheatham's, thrown successively against the enemy's line to search out its weak points. Here and there they seemed to win some temporary foothold, and more than one of the Federal batteries was captured for a time. But Thomas never lost the advantage of the fight. His troops were not only sheltered by their breastworks, but so much covered by wood, that their position was hid from the Confederates as they struggled up the steep slope and over the felled trees in their front, to meet a shattering and continuous fire; and if driven from an advanced post, the Federals were recalled to re-form unseen. By noon Stewart's division had been drawn in to the aid of those under Polk, but no lodgment was effected in the position of Thomas; and the latter observing the slackening vigour of the enemy, advanced his skirmishers towards the Chickamauga, capturing seven of the Confederate guns, and recovering some of the ground he had lost the evening before.

Here, however, ended the success of the Federals. At eleven, Longstreet had begun to move, and his skirmishers were soon pressing heavily on their right. The front line of the Federals was here composed of two-thirds of the corps of M'Cook, and in reserve towards the centre was the same proportion of Crit-

tenden's; for each of these commanders had lent, as we have seen, one of their divisions to Thomas, who still held them mixed with his own along the other flank. M'Cook had been ordered to throw back his corps on its left, so as to rest his right upon the higher part of Missionary Ridge; and thus his line formed an angle with that of Thomas. There was also a space between them; for in the earlier attack of Polk, Thomas had withdrawn Negley's division from that extremity of his position to strengthen his left, trusting to the reserve, who were close to his right rear, to guard the interval. One of these divisions under Wood had already moved forward for that purpose, and its skirmishers were just engaging with those of Buckner, on Longstreet's right, when an order from Rosecrans himself (whom Thomas had urged to send aid to his wing) directed Wood to close to his left and support Reynolds's division, on which Polk was at that time making his last effort. Brannan was between the posts of Reynolds and Wood, but somewhat in advance of both; and the latter general proceeded to carry out his orders so literally, as to march across the rear of the first on his way to join Reynolds, leaving a wide gap in face of Buckner. We do not pretend to decide whether chief or subaltern were the more blameable for the effect produced

by vague order and too literal execution. What we know certainly is that the mistake was made before a foe prompt to punish it. The space thus opened, mostly a vast corn-field, and the least protected part of Rosecrans' line, was at once filled by Buckner's troops, led on by Longstreet in person. Brannan's right was turned and routed at once; and his batteries flying to the rear, threw such confusion through Crittenden's remaining reserve division (Van Cleve's), that it refused to face the enemy, and began to retreat from the field. Davis's division of M'Cook's corps, whose left was towards the corn-field, was taken in flank like Brannan's, and routed so rapidly as to carry off with it the nearest brigade of Sheridan's, who held the right of the Federal line. His other two brigades stood for a while, animated by the personal exertions of their general; but Longstreet pressed them in front with the troops of Hood and M'Laws, and they also began to give ground. Hood, who led the charge with his well-known gallantry, was here so seriously wounded as to suffer amputation of the thigh upon the field. But his men were scarcely checked by his fall; and Longstreet in person having ridden to their head, they advanced steadily forward from the left, Bushrod Johnson and Hindman moving in the second line, and threw Sheridan's

troops into as great confusion as the rest. Meanwhile Buckner's skirmishers, pressing through the tall corn, had come suddenly upon the Federal reserve artillery, left without support by Van Cleve's flight, and fired upon them with such deadly effect as to capture seventeen of the pieces at once. All resistance had now ceased in front of the Confederate left. Rosecrans himself, in a last vain attempt to assist Sheridan in rallying his men, had been borne off with his staff in the general rout, and his right and centre had become a mass of panic-stricken fugitives, all pressing to escape by a pass through the Missionary Ridge, called Dry Dug Gap, through which most of the army had reached the Chickamauga, as they now left by it for the other side of the mountain. Many, however, were not so fortunate, 3,000 being intercepted and taken in one body by Buckner's advance, whilst other large detached parties were in like manner cut off. The fugitives made along the west side of the ridge for Rossville, whence Rosecrans went on to Chattanooga, six miles further, to see to the security of his bridges, pausing only to despatch his chief of the staff (Garfield) to report on the state of Thomas's wing. To this latter Sheridan strove to bring part of his division, rallied by great exertions at Rossville, and moved them back towards the battle-

field by the road on the east of the ridge near the Chickamauga. But these troops did not join Thomas until nightfall, and it was not by the aid of such exhausted and disheartened stragglers that he escaped the peril in which his whole wing was plunged by the first success of Longstreet.

That general, having seen the enemy's right fairly broken and routed, turned his attention to the enveloping their left, which had hitherto successfully resisted all the attempts of Bragg on its front. The latter, upon being urged by Longstreet to give him aid, declared Polk's wing to have been so severely handled that none of his divisions could be brought to charge again: Longstreet, therefore, proceeded on his work alone. Checking the advance which Preston's division had made under Buckner, and which was separating his wing altogether from the left of Polk's, he wheeled up his remaining troops on it as a pivot with such an unbroken sweep as to threaten the complete enveloping of the near portion of Thomas's long line. Neither the Federal divisions thus endangered nor their commander were aware of the extent of the ruin which had befallen their right and centre, until an aide-de-camp, sent that way for reinforcements, fled back to announce the Confederates moving from the ground lately held by Sheridan

to the rear of Thomas; and the latter rapidly threw back Wood's division (which had taken post behind his line) at an angle, to meet this unexpected attack. It was now near 1 P.M., and Thomas's natural anxiety at his uncertain position was heightened for a time by the appearance, towards Rossville, of a heavy column of infantry closing on his rear. Were this a new body of the foe, the morning's success would but have entailed destruction on the whole force, was the natural thought of the excited staff who surrounded him. But their fear was turned into hope as they learnt it to be the reserve of the army, a small corps under Granger, who had been all the morning on the march from Chattanooga, and who pressed on with his leading division (Steedman's) to take share in the fight. Moving rapidly down the rear of the line, as directed by Thomas, he gained the needful time to post his troops, in support of Brannan and Wood, and to receive the first charge of Longstreet at the head of the troops of M'Laws. Even these veterans recoiled before the fire of Steedman, who was flanked by a heavy battery; and the strength of the ground he held enabled him to repulse their attack, and a second one attempted by Hindman. General Preston's division, however, were more successful; and at about 5 P.M. their charge, as gallant as any

ever witnessed in war, carried the line held by Steedman, and forced the right of Thomas completely back. Polk was now renewing his attacks on the left and front, and the Federal ammunition was failing, their reserve supplies having fled to Rossville; so that Thomas felt at length compelled to order a retreat upon the latter place, which was not complete till after dark. The comparatively fresh* state of some of his brigades, which had scarcely left their breastworks all day, the exhaustion of Longstreet's corps, and the want of energy on the part of the rest of the Confederates (of whom Hill's divisions were very near the enemy's line of retreat), enabled him to execute this movement in tolerable order. At Rossville he was met by such parts of the rest of the army as its commanders had reorganized, and taking the direction of the whole by order of Rosecrans (who remained at Chattanooga to hurry the preparations made there for defence), he held his ground firmly until dusk next day, and then accomplished the rest of his retreat into the camp upon the river.

* One of these brigades in Johnson's division, which had fired all their ammunition away, had only *eleven men killed and wounded out of* 1,400. This immunity, Hazen, their commanding officer, attributes in his report solely to the shelter of the breastworks.

Bragg's pursuit after this great victory, so hesitating and slow as to lose him the greater part of its just fruits, by allowing his opponent time to reorganize the shattered half of his army, and to establish the whole firmly in the Chattanooga intrenchments, has stained his name irretrievably as a commander. The want of provisions for his men (due, surely, to his own mal-arrangement), by which he excused his inaction at the close of the battle and during the next day, was probably not more the real reason than his personal unpopularity with men and officers, which deprived him of the just influence necessary for pressing them on to continued exertions. Whilst we thus condemn him for faults obvious to all, it should not be forgotten that something of the same incompleteness attended the previous victories of the better organized army of Virginia. In the case of Chickamauga, however, the strength of the Confederates approached that of the beaten army so nearly as to deprive Bragg altogether of the excuse made for the apparent inaction of Lee, and of his predecessor, Johnston, at the close of the earlier victories of the Southern arms. Nor will the detail of his arrangements bear close examination. The ill-effects of the late opening of the battle are obvious in the appearance of Granger upon the field at the most critical period of the day,

and the arrival of dusk just as Thomas was forced to retire. It may be added that Bragg had quite sufficient men in hand at midday under Polk to have fully occupied Thomas, and to have allowed Longstreet to complete the destruction of the Federal right wing by a steady pursuit through Rossville, which should have ended only within the lines of Chattanooga; for the fugitives, if closely followed, would have scarcely rallied even there. Such a blow as the capture of the camp would have forced Thomas most effectually from his ground, and have made the victory of far more value than could the diversion of Longstreet's attack against that resolute commander. And if, as has been alleged, the choice of moving on or of making the wheel to second Polk was left by Bragg to his gallant subaltern, it but proves that a general hotly engaged in part of a battle cannot appreciate instantly the results as a whole, and that the commander-in-chief does wrong who abdicates his functions in the manner in question.

The Confederates paid dearly for the victory of Chickamauga in killed and wounded—mostly lost in the various attacks upon Thomas, who also carried off some hundreds of prisoners. Their army was weakened by 12,000; that of their enemy by 16,000; but of the latter nearly one-third were

unwounded prisoners, left in Longstreet's hands in the rout of the Federal right. Rosecrans also lost thirty-six guns and an immense quantity of stores and small arms.

On the 22nd the Confederate line was on the western slope of Missionary Ridge, facing the camp of Rosecrans. The latter had made such good use of the time allowed him, and his troops had so far recovered their *morale*, that an attack upon the intrenchments would probably have failed. At any rate, it was judged inexpedient to make it; and the hills not being near enough to command it by cannonade, the slower process of forcing the Federals to abandon the south bank of the Tennessee, by interrupting their supplies, was all that was attempted for the next month. Longstreet was directed for this purpose to seize the railroad passage at Bridgeport, and to occupy Racoon and Lookout Mountains, lofty masses of hill which fill the country on that side the plain of Chattanooga (see map), and project in parts into the stream. This being successfully accomplished, not only were the communications of Rosecrans along the south of the river destroyed, but the Confederate sharpshooters drove his trains from a road which skirted the other side, and compelled them to take their loads by a circuitous track through the hilly

district beyond, called Walren's Ridge; so that it cost them forty-five miles of heavy cartage to supply the beleaguered camp from the nearest point of the Nashville railroad. This latter Bragg had hoped, in the first flush of success, to destroy so completely as to reduce his opponent to starvation at once, by despatching his cavalry for that purpose under Forrest and Wheeler. These leaders crossed the Tennessee higher up, and at the end of September had gained the vicinity of the railroad and begun to harass the trains; but their numbers proved quite unequal to cope with the forces sent against them from Nashville and Chattanooga, and they were effectually worsted and driven off by Brigadier M'Cook and Generals Mitchell and Crook in the series of skirmishes that followed on the 2nd, 6th, and 8th of October. Bragg's hopes, therefore, rested solely upon the expected exhaustion of the draft animals of the Federal army. He learnt from deserters that their numbers were daily diminishing from overwork, and the rations of the enemy proportionately diminished. This condition of affairs would soon, he believed, grow so intolerable as to force Rosecrans to leave his works, either to recross the river in shame and disaster, or to attempt an almost hopeless assault upon the counter-intrenchments of the Confederates;

and he made no attempt to hurry his expected success.

But the time needful for its accomplishment was not to be granted him, for from all quarters relief was hurrying to the invested camp. Hooker, with the two corps detached from the army of the Potomac, had reached Bridgeport; Sherman was advancing from Vicksburg, by Memphis, to the same place with a body of equal strength; and Hurlbut had already pressed forward the garrison of the latter place, and the whole of his other troops in West Tennessee, to protect the railroads about Nashville. General Grant, the most daring and successful of the Western commanders, had now arrived near the scene from New Orleans (where an accident had for some weeks kept him *hors de combat*), and was at once invested (18th October) by the Federal Government with the direction of the whole of their western armies. At his instance, Thomas was appointed to succeed Rosecrans at Chattanooga, receiving at the same time instruction by telegraph to hold the camp to the last extremities; and his new chief arriving on the spot on the 23rd, took measures as vigorous as they were successful for the relief of the place. To do this it was necessary to clear the south bank from Bridgeport upwards; and this was accomplished,

so soon as proper reconnaissances had been made, by a combined movement from above and below on the morning of the 27th. Grant's chief engineer, W. F. Smith (lately arrived from his temporary service in Pennsylvania), commanded a boat expedition for this purpose; and dropping down the stream with 1,500 men of Hazen's brigade before dawn, seized without opposition a point called Brown's Ferry, beyond the base of Lookout Mountain, observed to be but lightly guarded by the enemy. This movement was supported by a force of 2,500 men under General Turchin (some time since restored to the commission he had foully discredited), which, having laid concealed in a wood opposite all the night, was now rapidly ferried over, and proceeded to intrench itself; whilst Smith, thus guarded, threw a pontoon bridge across the stream. Hooker, the same morning, effected his passage at Bridgeport, where the Confederates (who had found the line to this point too extensive for their army) had but a small force; and leaving part of the 12th corps to guard the passage, pressed up the river with one of its divisions, and the whole of the 11th. He was not at first molested by Longstreet, whose attention was probably attracted by a third movement made simultaneously from Chattanooga along the north

bank by General Palmer with one of the two * corps from the camp to cover that of Hooker. Late on the evening of the 28th, however, the Confederate left attempted a surprise of Hooker, who had reached the western side of Lookout Mountain, and posted his command strongly round a village called Wauhatchie. Such attacks are seldom happy in their results, and (as Cathcart, in accordance with other eminent authorities, has remarked) *ought always to fail when met by good troops.* In this instance, Howard's veterans drove off their assailants with heavy loss, about 1,000 of the Confederates being taken or left upon the ground; the greater part of these belonging to that half of Pickett's division—hitherto nearly intact—which had been absent from their corps at Gettysburg, and had arrived, under General Jenkins, too late to share in the glory won by it at Chickamauga. At this they had somewhat chafed, and were possibly too rashly thrown against largely superior numbers in this, their first combat, in the vain hope that some sudden success might prevent Hooker's junction with the troops entrenched

* M'Cook and Crittenden had been superseded by the President in his displeasure at the behaviour of their corps, and the latter (20th and 21st) consolidated into one under Granger. Thomas was succeeded in the command of his (the 14th) by Palmer. Generals Negley and Van Cleve lost their divisions for their share in the defeat.

at Brown's Ferry. As he would now certainly unite in a few hours with Smith, and separate the Confederates on Racoon Mountain from those on Lookout, Bragg determined to contract his position to the hills overlooking Chattanooga, and to content himself with watching the Federals below, and opposing their further advance; for such a movement might naturally be anticipated when the starving corps of Thomas should be supplied by means of this line just opened to them, and Sherman's reinforcements have arrived. Grant at once availed himself of his success to repair the railroad from Bridgeport to a point near Brown's Ferry, thus reducing his cartage to a distance of eight miles, and entirely relieving the distressed army of the Cumberland—for such was the name borne by that lately under Rosecrans.

Believing his own western troops to be sufficient for the defence of his position against any attempt of the Federals, Bragg suffered Longstreet to depart a week afterwards, and to move up the river against Burnside. That general was known to have scattered his forces—now increased to two whole but very weak corps — at considerable distances from Knoxville, and it was hoped that a sudden attack might so surprise and discomfit them as to drive him from the valley, and reopen to the Confederates

the direct communication by Lynchburg, between the army of Virginia and Tennessee. At all events, it would have the effect of keeping him from extending towards Chattanooga, and divide his force effectually from that of Grant; whilst it would bring near to Lee the corps lately withdrawn from his command.

With Longstreet's departure, it seems fitting to add but the briefest further notice of the operations in Georgia; for their importance, as concerns this work, ceases as his troops quit the scene, and turn their faces towards the theatre of their former exploits. His corps had not long left the lines of Bragg, when Grant's army, raised by Sherman's arrival to a strength of near 90,000 men, moved out to attack that general, who defended his entrenchments on the opposite hills with about half their number. The able tactics of the Federal commander, and his large superiority of force, proved too much for his opponent; and the day of the battle of Chattanooga (25th November) saw the Confederates flying into the interior of Georgia after a heavy loss in prisoners and guns, the victory being the most sudden and complete that the Federals could claim in any general action since the war began. This sharp defeat, and his indifferent use of the victory in September, justly cost Bragg, though personally

much favoured by Jefferson Davis, his command of the army of Georgia. The victor did not push his pursuit far into that State. The difficulty of transport and the lateness of the season were strong motives for closing the campaign; but the most urgent one (according to Grant's own report) was the necessity of at once lending aid to Burnside, now sorely pressed by Longstreet in the works at Knoxville. We proceed in the next chapter to trace the course of events which had led to this critical situation.

CHAPTER VI.

THE CAMPAIGN OF KNOXVILLE.

Moving with his wonted celerity, and aided partly by the yet unbroken portion of the Tennessee and Virginia Railroad, Longstreet, on the evening of the 13th November, drew near the posts of his new adversary. These extended along a front of eighty miles from Rogersville, close to the southern border of Virginia (see map), down the fine valley watered by the Holston and Clinch Rivers, which divides the Alleghanies from the Blue Ridge, as far as the junction of these streams with the Tennessee, which meets them in its westward course as it issues from the southern part of the last-named mountains in North Carolina. Burnside had had, as before noticed, an easy task in his first entrance into East Tennessee, when that country was uncovered by the retreat of Bragg in July from the centre of the

state. His own corps had been sent to Vicksburg in the latter part of the siege to reinforce the investing army, but with the 23rd, which had long been quartered in Kentucky, he moved from the vicinity of Nashville (thus turning the higher part of the Alleghanies by their southern extremity) against Kingston, the meeting point of the Clinch and Tennessee. His head-quarters occupied that place on the 1st September, and Knoxville, the chief place in the valley, was abandoned by General S. Jones, who had held the district with an ill-disciplined force of 6,000 men, totally unequal to arrest the invasion. The Confederates retreated northward into Virginia; and whilst Burnside's cavalry pursued them, and destroyed the bridges to prevent a sudden return, he moved with his infantry to the foot of Cumberland Gap, the chief pass through the Alleghanies from the Knoxville country into Kentucky, and cut off (as has been already briefly mentioned in the preceding chapter) its Confederate garrison of 2,000 men under Frazer, who surrendered with disgraceful readiness. This blow served to divide effectually the Confederates in the Atlantic States from that great central border district for which they had so long struggled in vain; and although Jones showed some activity, and on the very day of the surrender

of the Gap, surrounded and forced to surrender an outpost of 300 Federals stationed twenty-five miles from Knoxville up the valley, he was powerless to do more than slightly harass his opponent. Moreover the mountaineers of this country — a wild, independent race, who had scarcely ever admitted the sway of any general government, and had been noted for fierce opposition to their loyalist neighbours of Carolina in the days of Washington and Cornwallis—had of late felt themselves bitterly aggrieved by the enforced conscription of the Richmond Government, and had been, in many instances, converted into Unionists by its enforcement. Hence the Federal cause had more supporters in this district than in any other of the original Confederacy, excepting Western Virginia; and this having been bitterly and violently resented by the Southern officers, Burnside had much excuse for the sternness which he exercised towards all who opposed the new *régime*. He, therefore, in his occupation of the district he had lately overrun, had attended much to the convenience of supplies and the suppression of hostile feeling, but as little to his own military position as we have before shown that he did to the design of Halleck. He was, therefore, though now joined by his own corps, quite unprepared to meet this sudden

advance. One of his divisions, indeed, originally posted at Loudon, where the railroad crosses the Tennessee, thirty miles south-east of Knoxville, had been withdrawn across the river for security in October, abandoning the town to a small post of Confederates; but, by Burnside's orders, it had since detached a brigade twenty miles further down to occupy Kingston, the key—as before mentioned—to the approach on the Nashville side. This reduced the actual force, which was under General White (the same who had so unsuccessfully defended Harper's Ferry against Jackson a year before), to 1,700 men. White's troops, which formed part of the 23rd (Hartsuff's) Corps, were supported by a division of Burnside's own (the 9th) under Ferrero, stationed at Lenoirs, six miles further up the railroad in the direction of Knoxville. Longstreet had on his way received information of these particulars from a light column previously sent that way by Bragg, and learnt also that the outposts of Loudon had been (20th Oct.) driven over the river with loss from the village of Philadelphia, some miles to the south. Anxious to avail himself of the dispersed state of the Federals, he made a mere demonstration at Loudon, and directed his main column a little higher up before daylight on the 14th to a point called Huff's Ferry,

where there was a convenient place for forming a bridge. His movement was not wholly unobserved; but an order just received through the telegraph by General White from Burnside, to prepare for retreat on Knoxville, with some false information purposely offered by a spy as to the real purpose of Longstreet, threw vacillation enough into his conduct to render the passage of the Confederates wholly unopposed for the time, and to allow their advanced guard to approach his line of retreat. Happily for his command, a brigade had been detached by Ferrero from Lenoirs towards the ferry, which held the Confederates in check for a while, until White came up and united his force with it, Burnside (who had hurried from Knoxville) assuming the command of the whole. The ground was favourable for defence; and the Confederates (who numbered indeed but three regiments) were driven back towards the river, so far as to allow sufficient space for White's retreat. Burnside remained on the ground that night to cover it, but was attacked next day by Longstreet, who had crossed his main body in the interval; and though holding his men firmly together and well assisted by his subordinates, was driven into Lenoirs with the loss of some of his carriages. Before daylight on the 16th he had

abandoned that place with the whole train of White's division, and was on his march towards Knoxville; but was overtaken by Longstreet a few miles further, and brought to action at a place called Campbell's station, fifteen miles from Knoxville. Here he was supported by the remainder of the 9th corps with their batteries. Longstreet had been unable to bring his on thus far, and unaided by proper artillery (in which arm the Federal accounts admit a great preponderance) he failed to break through his adversary's line, and sacrificed considerable numbers of his infantry in driving Burnside back. The skirmishing—for the so-called battle was no more than that—continued hotly until dark, and at daylight next morning the Federals withdrew rapidly upon the works already prepared around the town by their commander's forethought, bringing with them only their guns and a part of the ammunition waggons, and leaving some 500 of their number in dead or wounded in the hands of their enemy, whose loss in men was no less. Meanwhile, the brigade from Kingston had time to effect its escape by a separate road on the other side of the Clinch; but the troops at Philadelphia and some minor posts on the south of Tennessee previously taken by the advance of Longstreet's column, amounted to the

number of 700 men, with six guns. The same number of men nearly, and four guns, fell into the hands of General Jones, who had made an advance from the Virginian border of Tennessee against Burnside's northern post at Rogersville, simultaneous with that of Longstreet from the lower Tennessee. From the 17th November, therefore, Burnside was shut in to Knoxville by the combined forces of the Confederates, numbering about 20,000 in all, and but little exceeding that of the garrison. This near equality, and the scattered directions of the roads from Knoxville towards Kentucky and Tennessee, hindered Longstreet greatly in his attempts to form a complete investment of the place. On the 19th, indeed, he attacked the outposts of Burnside on both sides of the Holston (which flows by the south of the town), and drove the defenders within the intrenchments. A part of Wheeler's cavalry also, which had accompanied Longstreet, occupied the roads towards Cumberland Gap to prevent the Federals being reinforced from Kentucky, and repulsed a party who had crossed the pass. But Longstreet's numbers were too limited to allow of his placing a detached force on the north side of the Clinch, and by that line the Federals, aided by the unionist feeling of the inhabitants, still managed

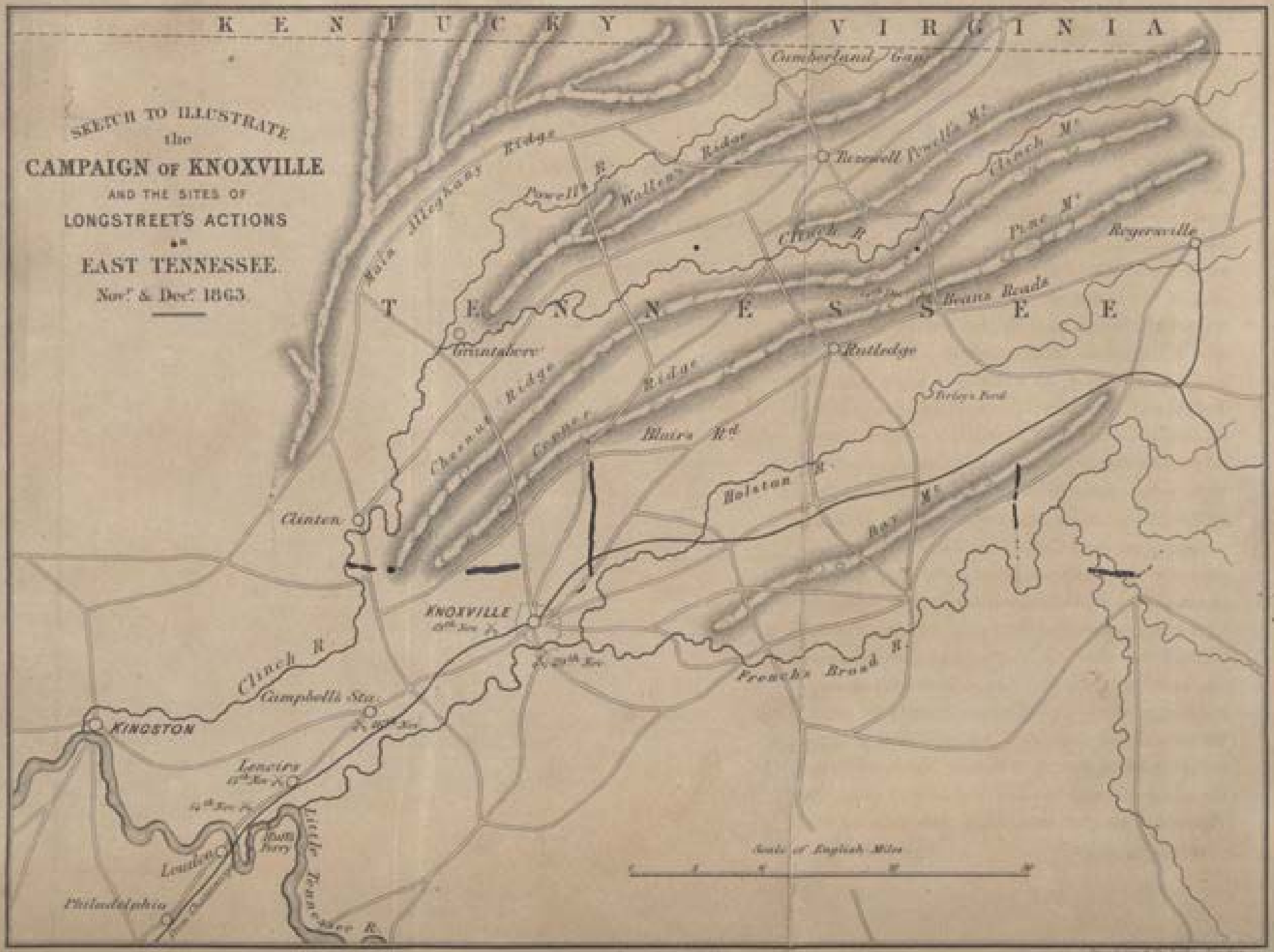
to communicate constantly with the central part of the State, though they were unable to bring supplies into the place. The Confederate commander, anticipating its speedy relief, should Bragg cease his guard on the hills around Chattanooga, on the first rumour of that general's disaster reaching him (29th Nov.), attempted an attack by main force upon the works. This was met with a readiness which, with the tenacity displayed throughout these operations, did much to redeem the mistakes previously committed by Burnside. The assault ended in a severe repulse, about 500 of M'Laws's men being left upon the ground before the works—a disaster which, with some previous misapprehension of Longstreet's orders, led to a hot difference between that general and his subaltern. After this failure, the efforts of the besiegers were once more directed to interrupting all the communications of their opponent, and so far succeeded as to threaten his command, whose numbers drew heavily upon the supplies within the place, with a prospect of speedy starvation if not relieved. Burnside, however, had managed, by means before mentioned, to keep Grant informed as to his situation; and the latter having, as we have seen, in a former chapter, completely driven Bragg from his front on the 25th November, made immediate efforts for his lieu-

tenant's release. As the last news from Knoxville told him that Burnside would have expended his whole stores by the 3rd December, and great part of the invested troops were by no means of that war-hardened class which could bear the prospect of starvation, it was evident that there was no time to be lost in their relief; and the battle of Chattanooga had scarcely ended before the corps of Granger, the only Federal one in reserve, received orders for an immediate march up the Tennessee. But the general thus selected proved wanting in the self-reliance necessary for such a reserve; and though aware that he was to be protected until clear of the operations of any of the troops under Bragg by a flank movement of Sherman's corps upon Calhoun (a point on the Knoxville road, forty miles north-west of the battle-field), he was found still lingering at Chattanooga, and making the excuses for his delay, when Grant returned thither on the 28th from the pursuit. The Federal commander lost no time in discussing the dangers and difficulties which his lieutenant had conjured up, but instantly placed the latter and his corps under Sherman's control, and directed that able officer to proceed at the head of the united force to Burnside's assistance. Sherman was as prompt to move as his chief to command;

and on the 4th December the head of his column had passed Loudon, preceded by the cavalry, who communicated with the troops at Knoxville the evening before. Longstreet, although lately reinforced, felt his army to be wholly inadequate to cope with the threatening advance upon his flank; and without maintaining his lines long enough to let Sherman attempt to turn them and place him between two fires, broke up from his position on the night of the 4th, and moved north-eastward to the Virginian border. Sherman, who reached the lately invested camp on the 6th, was for pursuing him with a sufficient force to expel the enemy from the Tennessee district altogether; but this offer was but coolly received by Burnside, who showed some jealousy (as would appear from the Federal reports) of the seniority of rank and high services of his new coadjutor, and declared Granger's corps to be sufficient as an aid for all local purposes. Upon this Sherman could do no more, according to his instructions, than retrace his footsteps to Chattanooga, leaving Granger behind him as requested, under the command of Burnside. The latter took little pains to carry out the purpose of assuming the offensive, nor did he long retain the charge which he had thus for a while kept in his own hands;

for his health soon after failed him. The end of the year found him awaiting the arrival of the successor whom he had demanded. Nor did the latter bring with him hopes of a milder rule, for he was no other than the General Foster who had made a certain reputation as an earnest supporter of ultra-abolitionist theories, which he had attempted to reduce to practical working during the period of his command on the coast of Carolina. The year 1863 closed with this change of command on the part of the Federals, who pushed their posts about thirty miles in the direction of Virginia; whilst Longstreet, slightly strengthened by some troops from that State, was watching them closely, in hopes of the opportunity of striking some blow which should redeem the prestige lost before Knoxville.

The opportunity soon appeared to be near; for the Federals (whose change of command threw much indecision into their proceedings) halted in their advance when it had scarcely been sufficient to enable them to command the whole of the roads to Cumberland Gap (by which the force would now once more be supplied), and contented themselves with following their enemy in his purposely slow retreat with the cavalry under Shackelford. On the 14th of



Published by Smith, Elder & Co. London 1863

December, whilst Burnside was yet in Knoxville conferring with his successor, Longstreet suddenly descended the valley in hopes of surprising Shackelford, whom he had ascertained to be isolated at Bean's Crossroads, twenty-five miles from the town, to the north side of the Holston river. His design included the cutting off of the cavalry by a movement of part of his own force of that arm by the south side of the stream, with orders to cross at a place called Tirley's Ford, by which they might gain the Federal rear. The alarm, however, spread too rapidly for this, and a brigade of Ferrero's men were moved in time to secure the passage. Longstreet's front attack so far succeeded that he soon drove Shackelford from the cross-roads, and forced him back six miles to the rear, with some loss in prisoners, the retreating squadrons (who, according to western practice, acted as dismounted skirmishers) having to leave their wounded as they fell. But the Federal infantry had taken up a supporting position under the senior general, Parke, and were so numerous and well posted that Longstreet declined to attack. He contented himself with accomplishing a minor object of his advance by detaching some cavalry on the Tazewell road towards Cumberland Gap, who captured a waggon train laden with supplies from

Kentucky. Some trifling skirmishing next day, during which the Federals were busily intrenching for the expected battle, served but to cover his retreat with the spoils—most welcome to his ill-fed men—which he had taken; and he retreated once more upon Rogersville and Virginia.

His campaign may be said to have closed at this point. It had, indeed, failed decisively, as a whole; for Burnside's tenacity, with the able combinations of Grant, had proved too much for the limited resources of the Confederate commander, who had shown, perhaps, in the assault upon Knoxville, a rashness not justified by past experience. For the rest of the winter and the early spring he continued to hold his intermediate position between Virginia and Tennessee; and the difficulty of supplying his troops in that mountainous region during a season of special severity was so great as scarcely to repay the Richmond Government by the supposed advantage of detaining a considerable part of Grant's army in the Knoxville valley.

As the weather grew milder with advancing spring, the increase of the Federal army before Lee was so manifest, and the aspect of affairs in his proper field so threatening, as to compel him to recall the whole force of Longstreet; which in March

had made its way once more through the Blue Ridge, had reached its old quarters by the Rapidan, and stood ready to share in the coming perils of the army of Virginia. But before it had left its winter quarters, Longstreet had made a third incursion on the posts around Knoxville, which, being connected more directly than the former with movements towards the Potomac, has been left for notice in the following chapter.

CHAPTER VII.

LEE AND MEADE IN EAST VIRGINIA.

RETURNING to Lee and the army he commanded in person, it will be remembered that the strength of his war-worn force—recruited with difficulty after its loss in Pennsylvania—was reduced to two corps early in September by the removal of Longstreet. The quiet which had prevailed along the Rapidan since the close of the retreat from Maryland, continued through the whole of that month; for Meade's army was also much weakened, as has been shown, and neither general felt his powers equal to any grand operation, nor chose to intrust his troops by indecisive demonstrations. Meanwhile, Imboden still exercised his watchfulness over the flank of Lee and the passes of the Alleghanies; but his skirmishes with the Federal leaders in that direction were of but little importance, (excepting only his surprise

and capture of the small post of Moorefield, to the west of the valley, in September,) for his opponent, General Kelley, confined his troops mainly to the posts near Winchester and Harper's Ferry. The Confederates had a much more active enemy in Western Virginia in Averill, a general of cavalry, whose force twice in July and August pierced the long line connecting Imboden's posts with those of S. Jones at the extremity of the State. On the former occasion Colonel Toland succeeded in reaching Wytheville, an important station in the railroad from Lynchburg to Knoxsville, and caused considerable consternation by his interruption of the then chief connecting link* between Richmond and the army of Bragg. Averill himself gained a still more striking success in the defeat and almost destruction of a body of 500 Confederates near Lewisburg in November, and showed clearly that these guerilla operations were no longer to be conducted solely to Federal disadvantage. Lee's own cavalry were not actively employed, for Stuart's troopers had, during their invasion, suffered much loss in horseflesh; and the difficulties of supplying forage—though less than in the spring—compelled him to keep but a moderate force near head-quarters, so that Meade's reconnais-

* See map at p. 149.

sances were mainly met by infantry in the first part of the autumn.

Early in October, however, the army once more was in the field, Lee having called in the outlying portions of his troops and resolved to take the offensive boldly. His two corps had been recruited, and, with the cavalry (now organized in two divisions under F. Lee and Hampton), formed a strength of nearly 50,000 in all—a number not greatly unequal to that which confronted him. As Meade, lying patiently still, could evidently not be tempted to commit himself by an attack, his adversary had conceived the design of surprising him in flank, and, perhaps, forcing the army of the Potomac to a sudden encounter at disadvantageous terms. Should the Federals decline battle and retreat, Lee hoped to manœuvre so rapidly as to capture part of the numerous depôts which lined the railroad in their rear. The advance would at the least have the effect of so occupying the army of the Potomac as to prevent any further detachments being made from it to the succour of Rosecrans and his imprisoned troops at Chattanooga.

On the 9th, Lee began his movement, the army passing the river by its left on the road to Madison Courthouse, near which point lay the right of

Meade.* Hill's corps and Ewell's moved in parallel by-roads, the latter being to the left, and the march of the whole covered by Hampton. Fitzhugh Lee remained with a small infantry support to guard the line of the Rapidan and deceive Meade as long as possible; but the latter was fully on the alert; and Kilpatrick, with four regiments of cavalry and an infantry support, having been directed to cross the river, became engaged with the Confederates, and was driven back after losing some prisoners, but not before he had discovered the movement up the stream. The Federal commander, resolved not to fight, but in a position of his own choice, and warned by the fate of Pope on the same ground a year before, broke up his camp, and marched direct to the Rappahannock, which the main body of his army crossed on the 11th. Lee, who felt his adversary eluding him, and knew of the retreat as well from Hampton's scouts as from the sudden masses of smoke which rose along the plain, pressed his troops on to Culpepper, but reached it that day only to find the neighbourhood deserted and the stores all but destroyed. Hampton's division uniting not far off with F. Lee's, Stuart led them against Pleasanton, who

* These operations, and those consequent on Meade's advance, may be traced by the aid of the maps at p. 22, vol I.

was posted near Brandy Station to cover the rear of Meade's columns, and a sharp fight ended in the retreat of the Federal horse across the Rappahannock, with a considerable further loss in prisoners. Meade showing some intention of holding his new line, the next two days were passed by the Confederates in an exact repetition of their late flank move round his right. Marching from Culpepper direct on Warrenton, instead of following the railroad, they made for a passage over the Rappahannock at a place called Sulphur Springs, about eight miles higher up than that which Meade was watching, and hoped thus to debouch upon his flank. This attempt he met by covering the threatened wing with Gregg's cavalry division and some artillery, and continuing the retreat of his infantry. Again the shorter route and abundant supplies of the Federals enabled them to elude their enemy; and Warrenton was abandoned by their right wing, and entered by Lee at the end of his circuit, without any combat of importance; although Meade only fully discovered the real advance of his enemy across the river in time to save Birney's division of the 3rd corps (which was on the south side near the cavalry) by a night march to a ford lower down. On the 14th, the retreat of the Federals continued in two columns;

one by the railroad, the other by the cross-road from Warrenton to Manasses Junction. Hill's corps being on the right (according to the Confederate arrangements throughout the advance) had naturally the pursuit of the former, and overtook it in the afternoon at Bristow Station. Warren—who as a young man had previously gained, as we have seen, the post of chief engineer, and whose late promotion to major-general's rank had been much challenged—now commanded the 2nd corps, which brought up the Federal rear. The skirmishers of Heth, who led Hill's corps, had almost gained the right flank of the Federals under cover of a wood, when they were discovered and checked; and Warren, with coolness and skill of a remarkable order under the circumstances, rapidly threw his three divisions into position behind the stream known as Broad Run, which here crossed the line of march. A Confederate battery, too eager to take share in the expected rout of the enemy's rearguard, was pushed forward within range of his very superior force of artillery; and being completely overthrown by his fire, five of its six guns were abandoned by their gunners and supports, and captured at once. A charge of infantry, not less rash, was now attempted by two North Carolina regiments (the 26th and

28th) against Warren's right, where Webb had partly concealed his infantry in the bushes along the stream. This was as unsuccessful; and the advancing Southerners, suddenly coming into a semi-circle of fire, were broken and fled. Many of them threw down their arms, and surrendered rather than recross the open piece of ground over which they had just rushed into the snare; and Warren sent in both their regimental standards with 450 prisoners. This sharp repulse (for the Confederates lost, besides, some hundreds of killed and wounded) checked Hill's pursuit effectually; and although Sykes had been sent back by Meade to the support of the rearguard, his services were not required by Warren, whose conduct proved him so equal to the occasion, as to fully justify the rank and position he now held. At nightfall, Lee was hurrying up the rear of his columns with intent to bring on a general action, but next day Meade had drawn his whole force across Bull's Run, and was intrenching himself with the intention of maintaining his position. But Lee had now so nearly approached Washington, that there was but little hope left of surprising the communications of his wary foe; and the difficulty of supplying his own army in so advanced a position induced an immediate retreat on his part, which

was continued until he repassed the Rappahannock on the 18th. Stuart carefully covered this movement, and attained a very decisive advantage in another cavalry affair before Warrenton on the 19th October, which closed this brief campaign. Lee had taken over 2,000* prisoners in the advance, chiefly with his horse, and had caused the destruction of a vast quantity of the enemy's stores; but, on the other hand, he had himself suffered considerable loss in the only important infantry affair which took place, and had been foiled completely in his main object.

It is instructive to compare his whole operation with that so successful against Pope on the same *terrain* in the preceding autumn. It was not that the tactics of the Confederates had been altered for the worse, or the qualities of their soldiers deteriorated. The change was on the other side. Not only were the various subordinate departments of the Federal army infinitely improved by practice on actual service, but the men had now a proper confidence in themselves—especially since their triumph at Gettysburg—far different from the braggadocio spirit, alternated with fits of deep despondency, which had

* Two thousand and two by his official return, excluding Imboden's capture.

marked the army of the Potomac in its early campaigns. With this had come a faith in the warlike qualities of their generals which had formerly been altogether wanting. One crying evil still pervaded their whole organization in the utter absence of respect or trust in their regimental officers as a body. But this could not wholly mar their conduct in battle and on the march, now so far trustworthy that their chief had no longer in it the source of such wearing anxiety as M'Clellan had ever felt. How improved was their staff and cavalry may be judged from Lee's abandoning the hope of making any such wide circuit to surprise them as Jackson's famous flank march by the hills. Reduced thus to movements in a narrower compass, his one seeming advantage gained by the advance from Warrenton was foiled by Meade's caution and Gregg's activity; and instead of M'Dowell's corps running blindly, unawares, almost against the muzzles of Confederate batteries posted to surprise them (as actually occurred * in Pope's retreat), we find the first shock of the pursuers so ably received by Warren, that he in turn brings the advantage to his side. Stragglers there were many, and much wasteful destruction of stores; but as a

* See the narrative of Captain Noyes, who was serving on the staff of one of the brigades thus shamefully surprised.

whole the conduct of the retreat reflected credit both on the army and its leaders.

Imboden, who had made a parallel movement down the Shenandoah to cover the Confederate left, concluded his own share in the operations by a very successful surprise of Charleston, near Winchester, where he captured 430 of a detachment of 500 men posted there, with all their stores, and brought them off in triumph, though pursued by Kelley with part of the garrison of Harper's Ferry.

Lee had now halted south of the line of the Rappahannock, but his advanced guard occupied some old works thrown up by the Federals on the north bank to cover the chief passage at the railroad crossing, with pickets also on the same side at Kelly's Ford, six miles lower down. As this new position would enable him to debouch at any time within a very short distance of Washington, and so formed a standing menace to that city, Meade received orders to force the Confederates from it at all risks. This was most successfully effected by the Federal commander on the 7th of November, when he directed his army, in two heavy columns, against the enemy's advanced posts, with such suddenness that the Confederates were effectually surprised. Their guard at the railroad consisted of but one brigade of Early's

division (Hayes's, so often mentioned), supported by a second under Colonel Godwin on the other bank, which crossed to join Hayes on the first alarm. A regiment detached by Rodes formed the whole force at the other passage; and the bulk of the divisions being far to the rear, they were quite unable to cope with the coming storm. Moving at early day from Warrenton Junction, the Federals came on in great strength, and were ably directed in the attack. Sedgwick, with the 6th corps on the right, and French, with the 3rd on the left, led the advance, and in each case, after using their artillery freely, stormed the intrenchments (those at Kelly's Ford were but a line of rifle-pits), which were not backed by any sufficient force of guns on the other side of the stream. A great part of the Confederates who occupied the north bank were taken or killed, and Meade sent more than 1,800 prisoners and seven field-pieces to Washington as the substantial proofs of his success. Ewell, to whose corps the detachment belonged, has been much censured for leaving so small a body of his best infantry within half a day's march of the enemy's army, and without support or even proper means of retreat. Whoever was personally to blame, it is clear that the original contempt of the Confederates for their enemy had

produced in the Army of Virginia a general carelessness—no longer well-founded—such as in this instance gave his opportunity to Sedgwick. This blow caused Lee to withdraw behind the Rapidan once more; and with this advantage, Meade would have been well content to close the operations of the year. But his Government, elated at it more than was their general, and informed by spies that the demand for troops in Georgia and East Tennessee had caused the army of Virginia to be still further reduced, insisted upon the necessity of his taking the field once more before the winter closed in. Thus urged, the Federal chief attempted a bolder step than any which had hitherto marked the period of his command; and on the 26th November, having previously concentrated his five corps round Culpepper, and issued five days' provisions in advance, he threw them in three columns to the left by the different roads leading to the Rapidan, and crossed at Germania (selected, with Ely's Ford five miles lower down, by Hooker for the same purpose in his movement of the spring,) at another passage just below it, and Jacobs' Mill, the next higher one on the stream. French and Sedgwick formed the right of his army in this movement, Sykes and Newton the left, and Warren crossed at Germania in the centre, uniting with the latter wing

on the 27th near the Orange and Fredericksburg road, a little to the west of the point near Chancellorsville, where Howard had received the shock of Jackson on the day so fatal to Hooker's campaign. Coming thus without opposition on the flank of Lee, he hoped that that general would be forced to a retreat, and allow him either to grasp the railroad near Orange; or, moving in the opposite direction through Chancellorsville, to seize the line near Fredericksburg; and in either case bring the Federal front nearer to Richmond. But Lee had early information of his adversary's march, and instantly prepared to concentrate his army. This was diminished to a strength of 35,000 men (as the secret information at Washington rightly gave it); and with so small a number the Confederate chief resolved to take that defensive part which few other generals have so successfully used to supplement inferior resources. Ewell's corps, which lay to the right of the army, was ordered in, to a position previously marked out and strengthened for such a purpose behind Mine Run, a brook which falls into the Rapidan above Jacob's Mill. The movement was not accomplished without a collision; for Johnson's division crossed the head of French's column on its southward march, and partly surprised the Federals

at a point on the old road between Chancellorsville and Orange, near the junction of that which leads to Germania. In the skirmish which followed each side lost nearly 500 killed and wounded; but Johnson had time to carry off a number of prisoners taken at the first encounter. Meade, who had gained beforehand some particulars of his enemy's contemplated choice of ground, resolved to test its strength; and in continuing his southward movement, pressed his left rapidly forward on the main road to Orange (which runs south of, but nearly parallel to the old turnpike), and thus wheeling his army with its face to the west, approached the right bank of the Mine Run. The position of Lee, when reconnoitred on the 28th, proved very formidable. The brook had been raised in many parts by dams so as to render it impassable by fording; and in the intervals breastworks with abattis of felled trees in front, flanked by carefully posted batteries, seemed to promise defeat to all assault. Meade himself next day in vain examined the whole line (which was of great length for the numbers of the defenders) for a weak point. Yet on the 30th he directed a heavy cannonade, under cover of which Warren's corps, on the right centre, advanced to assault a portion of the works which he had judged practicable of approach. It proved to be

far otherwise, however, and after losing 300 or more of his advanced guard, he found it necessary to recall them. Thus decisively brought to a standstill by his opponent's simple change of front—the latter proving to be even more unassailable in his new position than when covered by the Rapidan—Meade naturally grew anxious as to his own situation. He had brought with him in waggons a further supply of ten days' provisions beyond that carried by each soldier; but a brigade of Stuart's horse, under Rosser, had, on the 29th, surprised and destroyed a part of his train, with a quantity of ammunition, beating off a part of Gregg's cavalry so completely that they were only rallied by the support of a brigade of infantry detached by Warren to their succour. An unsuccessful assault on the Mine Run lines, leading to a defeat, would leave him in a most critical position, inasmuch as Lee would be enabled, by crossing his left over the Rapidan, to completely sever the Federals from the Alexandria railroad. In fact, as their chief had expected, Meade feared to attack the Army of Virginia so posted; and his nature was too cautious to allow him to take the other course, of attempting a cross march to the Fredericksburg line through the tangled country which intervened, with Lee possibly pressing close upon his rear. The latter evidently declined to

give up his advantage by issuing from his works to attack a force twice his own in numbers. At last Meade, resolving rather to brave the anger of his superiors than to risk a disaster, broke up his encampment (the weather being now so severe that he had lost some men of his pickets by death from cold), and, moving before daylight on the 1st December, recrossed the Rapidan, with but slight molestation from the enemy's cavalry, and on the 3rd had resumed his old head-quarters at Culpepper, but recently occupied during his absence by Mosby with a party of his irregular horse. The Federals had paid by the loss of 1,000 men for their abortive campaign, which ended the active operations of the autumn, and thus added another laurel—won with but little bloodshed—to those already worn by Lee.

CHAPTER VIII.

SPRING OPERATIONS—DAHLGREN'S RAID.

So universal is the knowledge of public affairs in an American army—where every native soldier can read, and all feel bound to applaud or condemn the Government whom they serve—that every private in the host which Meade led back over the Rapidan was aware that he did so at the risk of losing his high post. Bitter, indeed, was the censure at Washington at his supposed timidity; and the President himself was so disappointed at the failure of the hopes raised by the late advance, that he cast about for a successor more ready to accept the gage of battle. Such an one, however, was not easy to find as should satisfy the requirements of the hour. Sedgwick was at first thought of for the promotion; and he had some real claims from past service, and from his long-standing popularity with the working body of the army (amounting to real affection

among his own corps), won by soldierly bearing and attention to his men. But on the first intimation of such an offer being contemplated, he signified so plainly his disinclination to be employed as the instrument of superseding the victor of Gettysburg, that the intention was abandoned. Pleasanton had been also named by rumour for the post; but this, as it appeared, chiefly from his open censure of his chief's timidity; and the latter was suffered—not without some murmuring among the more sanguine spirits of the army of the Potomac—to retain the charge of its fortunes. Public opinion, even when led astray by the power of the press, has in America, not less than elsewhere, a tendency to balance itself in favour of the right; and it soon became once more favourable to the man who had had the courage rather to risk his own disgrace than his army's ruin. It is not surprising, therefore, that when, some time after, Meade took the strong step of justifying his conduct at Mine Run by a letter published in the journals, the indirect censure on his superiors thus implied did him no harm in his now strengthened position.

The frosts of winter were severely felt through Virginia during the two months that followed; and in February gave way only to leave the plain country

almost impassable from the depth of mud on the rough country roads, which perforce limited the existence of both armies to rest in their cantonments. Lee made no attempt to break this repose by any direct movement on the exhausted theatre of war before him, where weather and want of supplies prevented even his horse from operating with any effect. But as both he and President Davis were somewhat nettled at the facility with which Averill's cavalry had of late been traversing the centre of Virginia, they resolved to make a more combined and powerful effort than Imboden alone was equal to, for the purpose of destroying the outposts of Kelley, or at least confining them to the neighbourhood of Harper's Ferry, and so depriving Averill (who held a roving commission along the Western Virginia border between Kelley's forces and those of Foster) of their support. Early—an officer of whose activity and energy Lee had formed a high opinion—was entrusted with this service;* and at the opening of the year he had crossed the Blue Ridge, and was descending the Shenandoah with three brigades of lightly-equipped infantry, and a like number of cavalry, consisting of the combined commands of Imboden

* For these operations of Early's, reference may be made to the map at page 16 of this volume.

and Fitzhugh Lee. On the 3rd January, Imboden, who was in advance, had passed through Winchester, and was engaged with the cavalry of Colonel Boyd, from Harper's Ferry. Detachments of the Confederates were then sent westward, in order to reconnoitre the neighbourhood of the Baltimore and Ohio railroad, it being Early's design to cut that line near Martinsburg, and so to sever the Federal parties stationed on the west side of the valley from General Kelley's garrison. This movement was anticipated by Averill, who had retreated on Martinsburg with his whole force, and prepared to defend the place. Learning this, Early despatched Fitzhugh Lee (who had with him Walker's and Rosser's cavalry brigades) into the passes of the Alleghanies westward of Winchester and Strasbourg. The Confederates passed by Moorefield, the principal town of that mountain district, and moved upon Petersburg, a village nearer to the sources of the Potomac, where the Federals had a considerable depôt. Finding, however, that this place had been strongly entrenched by Colonel Thorburn, who commanded the post, and hearing from Early that the continued severity of the weather would prevent his supporting them with any infantry, they retreated, having accomplished nothing more than the capture on their way of a

train of 75 waggons. Early then fell back up the valley towards Strasbourg, his advance having served only to create some consternation along the border; for a party of his troopers had almost reached Cumberland—a well-known town near the western extremity of Maryland, and within a few miles of Pennsylvania—causing the militia of the neighbourhood to be summoned to its defence.

Towards the end of January, Longstreet made another advance against Knoxville from his threatening position at the head of the Holston Valley, and drove the Federal cavalry, under Sturgis, almost upon the place itself, which his advanced guard approached upon the 19th. In this movement he again captured a number of stores: and this acquisition, together with the employment of his troops (whose wants had caused much complaint), were perhaps main objects of the advance, and of that in December previously recorded, not less than the desire to detain the Federals in the mountains of Tennessee; for Grant had shown signs of an intention of pressing Thomas's army forward from Chattanooga. The new alarm at Knoxville caused an immediate report in the north, that Foster would be reinforced largely from the army of the Potomac; and, indeed, the intention existed of sending Sedg-

wick's corps to his aid, although the retreat of Longstreet, who fell back rapidly with his captures, prevented its execution. The rumour, however, produced some further activity on the part of Early, and he moved once more from his head-quarters at Harrisonburg towards Winchester. Instead, however, of an advance on that place, he turned into the mountains on his left, and detached a brigade of his cavalry (being that of Rosser, left in the valley by Fitzhugh Lee, who had returned to Stuart with the rest of his division,) northward along the ridges of the Alleghanies. By a rapid march they struck the railroad on the 2nd February a few miles south of Cumberland, and destroyed a portion of it, burning an important bridge at Patterson's Creek. Averill, on the first alarm, marched against them, but with little effect, for they had gained the start of him before he arrived from his post near Martinsburg. Early, in the meanwhile, had moved the remainder of his column against Petersburg, resolved to capture that place; but Thorburn, observing that guns and infantry formed this time part of the approaching force, chose not to risk its defence, and withdrew on the night of the 30th January before it was invested, abandoning a few stores, and losing a convoy which was on the way with supplies

for his command. The Confederate general remained in the neighbourhood of Moorefield until rejoined by Rosser, who retired through Burlington, skirmishing with the Federal horse upon the way; but he did not attempt to maintain his forward position, which was threatened on the north by Averill's command of the road from Martinsburg and Romney, and against which General Sullivan was advancing with a division from the west. He retreated from Moorefield on the 4th, after a rear-guard affair with Colonel Mulligan, who led the advance of Sullivan's troops, and regained his former position in the valley with but little loss: though it may be questioned whether the trifling disturbance of a communication so easily repaired by the Federals was worth the cost in horses, which could be ill spared by the Confederates. However this may be, it is certain that the immediate anxiety produced by the raid at Washington was considerable; for soon after, General Sigel, now long out of employ, and never favoured by Halleck, was appointed to the charge of the whole Federal forces in or about the valley, including the troops which, under Kelley himself, Averill, and Sullivan, had been acting in independent fashion during the recent movements.

Simultaneously with the repulse of Early (whose action at Moorefield was the last near the Shenandoah during this season), General Meade broke the long silence on the Rapidan by a reconnaissance in force across that river, executed on the 6th February by portions of the 3rd and 2nd corps of his army. The passage, which was made at Germania ford, was but slightly disputed; but the pretended advance was soon changed into a retreat, as there was no serious intention of doing more than attracting the attention of Lee, whilst Butler, who had succeeded Dix in the peninsula, should attempt a surprise on Richmond, which was reported to be destitute of a garrison. The force he led for the purpose was composed of three brigades of infantry and one of cavalry, which, on the 7th, advanced as far as Bottom's Bridge, the well-known crossing of the Chickahominy, on the Whitehouse road. After a slight skirmish along the banks of that river, Butler finding his advance fully discovered and opposed, retired without further pursuing his project, which had been neither prepared with skill nor executed with vigour. The alarm within the oft-threatened city was but slight, though there were indeed but few regular troops in its vicinity; nor did any one at this time consider it possible that

the Southern capital should be seriously endangered by any expedition of the character of a raid. Yet a month had hardly gone by when its inhabitants were startled by an approach to their walls so daring in design, and by them believed so fell in purpose, that even in its failure it did more to rouse fierce passion and embitter strife than the most savage incident the war had yet witnessed.

Colonel Dahlgren, the real author of the new project, was a man of character in itself so remarkable, and so typical of the deeper passions which stirred the North to its tremendous efforts for the reconquest of the Union, that he well deserves the study of the historian. Born of a good family, and wedded by prescription to the service of his country—in whose navy his father had long been distinguished—he was far from being of those who could view with indifference the lessening of her external power by the proposed separation. By many a thousand of her youth—(and among them all there was none of purpose more earnest, or soul more romantic, than Ulric Dahlgren)—the vision had been cherished of a mighty democratic power growing up to fill the western hemisphere so with its greatness as to overshadow the whole earth, and shed freedom over its nations. Such a feeling of belief in his country's

destiny may be called lust of empire abroad, but it stands for patriotism at home; and those who boast of England's greatness and her 'dominion that the sun never sets on,' would do well to examine themselves before they condemn the young American. To one born and brought up in these convictions of the just future of the Union, its voluntary disruption by the South seemed such a crime as sacrilege could not outdo, and the perpetrators of the act the basest traitors that sword was ever lifted to punish. The very force of the religion which a pious mother had, through his earlier years, instilled into his heart, made him long, like the Puritans of our own revolution, to smite down those who opposed the political faith which to him seemed destined to spread justice and freedom through the world. Burning with such thoughts as these, and having just attained to manhood at the outbreak of the civil war, he threw himself with all the ardour of youth and passion into the struggle against secession. Those writers who, content to judge from a superficial view, or led by their own sentiments wholly, have sought to trace the first cause of the uprising of North against South in a national hatred and loathing of slavery, have missed the real motive power which first called twenty millions of free people under arms, and gave

to Abolition that growing strength which stern fanaticism brings to any cause allied with revolution. This power it was, this yearning for their country's greatness—and no special love for the negro race—which moved Dahlgren and a thousand others less known than he, to offer their lives freely for the unity of their country.

Of daring courage and noted horsemanship, he soon became sensible of the deficiencies of the Federal cavalry, and had attempted, as early as the days of M'Clellan, to lead them to a better fame. The breaking up of Hooker's staff (of which he had formed one) on the supersession of that general in 1863, gave him his opportunity; and he applied for the command of a detachment of horse, with which he volunteered to harass the rear of the Confederates. Twenty dragoons only were granted him at first; but his almost immediate capture of an orderly bringing despatches to Lee from Richmond, brought him into notice, and after the battle of Gettysburg he moved, with 100 of the 6th New York Cavalry, placed under his orders, to attack the retreating trains and their escorts. In this service, and the series of skirmishes near Hagerstown, he effected as much real havoc as Kilpatrick or Gregg with their divisions; but, on the 6th of July, was badly wounded in the leg, in cover-

ing some of his captures from a superior force led by Jenkins. Amputation proved necessary, and his career for some time was closed by the illness that followed; but his name as a dashing leader (added possibly to the great services of his father to the Union) caused the President to console him with a flattering letter from Stanton, enclosing his brevet of colonel, bestowed without passing through the usual grades. Recovering by slow degrees, and musing much, no doubt, upon the high career which seemed open to him—who now held rank such as Napoleon had not reached at the age of twenty-one—he returned to the army of the Potomac in its winter-quarters, when hard weather and enforced idleness made the sufferings of the Northern prisoners at Richmond seen doubly near to all. There were known to be about 10,000 Federals there confined in the Belle Isle prison on the James; whilst the garrison of the city was but weak. The prisoners crowded in this island complained much of their treatment; and although receiving the same rations as were issued to the Confederate soldiers, these were so scanty, that those who could not eke them out by private means, fared but ill compared to their well-supplied comrades in the field. It is not surprising that many plans were

canvassed for their release by surprise; and that to Dahlgren—whose feelings led him to believe the worst of the Confederate Government—the enterprise seemed the holiest of duties, as well as a swift road to further honours. Forthwith an expedition was arranged, under the nominal conduct of Kilpatrick, who felt the urgent need, after the autumn failures, of doing something to retrieve the reputation which was slipping from him. The more dangerous part of the design—and no forlorn hope was ever mustered for more perilous work—was undertaken by Dahlgren. This consisted in a proposed attempt to cross with a detached force to the south side of the James, and move on Richmond by that bank, where an enemy would naturally be but little expected, and near which the prison lay. Kilpatrick, with the main column, was to make a simultaneous demonstration against the works to the north of the city; and it was hoped, under cover of this, that Dahlgren's men might break their way into the prisons, and release the captives. Once free, it was even supposed that the number of these, and their desperation, might enable them to master the surprised capital, and perhaps hold it until Butler's forces—which were to advance at the same time up the peninsula—should come to their aid.

It is significant of the character of the man, that the chief who was thus to guide his dragoons into the heart of a hostile city, was still suffering from the debility of fever, and unable to move on foot without crutches.

On the night of the 28th of February, after Sedgwick's corps, and Custer's cavalry had made a feint on Lee's left, the expedition left Meade's lines for Ely's ford, beyond the Confederate left. It was composed originally of 3,800 cavalry, with three light guns, the whole being formed of selected detachments of well-mounted men of various regiments. Crossing the Rapidan unopposed, they pushed on through the wooded district south of Chancellorsville, called the Wilderness (soon to be the scene of a deadly series of struggles enduring half the length of a European campaign), to Spottsylvania Courthouse, where Dahlgren, with 500 volunteers, left the main column on the 29th for his separate march, which lay southward by Fredericshall,* and thence direct to the James.

Kilpatrick, continuing his south-eastward course,

* A station on the Orange and Richmond (or Central Virginia) railroad, twenty miles west of the former place, and not far from Louisa, which will be seen on the most imperfect map of Virginia. The sketches in the first volume may be useful in illustrating parts of this raid.

struck the railroad which runs from Orange to Richmond at Beaverdam station, thirty miles west of the former place; and pausing only to do as much damage to the line as was consistent with a somewhat rapid march, rested for the night some miles further on, near to the South Anna River, the southern branch of the Pamunkey. A detachment of 400 men was sent eastward before daylight, with intent to destroy the railroad bridge over the stream, but retreated on finding it protected by a party of infantry; and the whole force was soon on its way toward Richmond, now but twenty miles distant, in the hope of finding its way into an undefended capital. Early in the afternoon, an outer line of redoubts was reached and passed through without resistance; but the advance had been made known by the telegraph some hours before, and a heavy fire from works within upon a brigade under General Davies, which followed up the advanced guard, soon proved that the movement was discovered and prepared for. Davies at once dismounted his men, and deployed them as skirmishers, after the fashion now adopted by Federal cavalry, and, in days long past by the extinct* dragoon of the European armies.

A dragoon, in the days of Turenne and Marlborough, was a soldier carried on horseback, but prepared to fight on foot. Improve-

But Kilpatrick, seeing the redoubts before him to be strong and apparently well manned (though there were in truth but a few hundred troops, with some city militia within them), and hearing nothing of Dahlgren's expected attack on the other side, grew alarmed at his own position, and drew his men off before dark, moving westward across the Chickahominy to Mechanicsville.* Here he encamped for the night; but General Hampton, who arrived that evening at Richmond after a rapid march with 400 horse, learning the enemy's position from the report of Colonel Bradley Johnston, who had hung upon the invader's track throughout their advance, resolved to attempt a surprise. This was so far successful, that he captured a hundred of their number, and broke up the encampment, forcing them to retreat down the river. In the morning, however, Kilpatrick discovered how small was the number of the pursuers, and his rearguard, under Davies, drove them off with ease near Gaines's Hill. Passing thence to the Whitehouse railway, the Federals were met at the close of the day (2nd February) by the force from

ments in the organization of armies have caused this arm of the service to disappear. Yet of such are the American cavalry on both sides chiefly composed—specially in the West, where they carry neither sword nor lance.

* See map at p. 22, vol. I.

the peninsula, under Butler (of 2,000 infantry and 1,000 horse), which had been intended to co-operate with them; and which, by some unexplained misconception, had moved just a day too late to be of any effectual assistance to Kilpatrick or Dahlgren. On the 3rd and 4th, the united column was joined by the greater part of Dahlgren's command, coming from the upper Pamunkey; but their enterprise had yet more completely miscarried, and their leader had paid for his share in it with his life.

He had parted from Kilpatrick, as before stated, on the 29th, at Spottsylvania, and had reached Fredericshall, his next point, early in the day. Having here destroyed the station with some stores, but missed a park of artillery which he had hoped to capture, he proceeded onward to the James. A negro fugitive of the district had undertaken to conduct the party to a ford not far from Richmond: but through treachery or ignorance missed his way; and at midnight the Federals, after much wandering, found themselves near Goochland, the nearest point to the city reached by Percy Wyndham* in Stoneman's raid, and a day's march higher up the stream than that they sought. The wretched guide was sacrificed on the spot to their fury, and the course

* See vol. I., chap. XI.

of the river followed down towards the city; but the latter was now only attained on its guarded side, and that at dark on the 2nd, twenty-four hours after Kilpatrick had retreated. Driven off in a vain attempt to surprise the nearest work, Dahlgren marched northward through the darkness, seeking now only to save his column, which he strove to guide in person; but at dawn found himself with but a hundred dragoons following, the rest having wandered from him on the way at some turning of the byroads he pursued. That day, the 3rd, he crossed the Pamunkey and Mattapony rivers in succession, inclining eastward in hopes to find some road open towards York River. But the country was now beset by armed parties of excited citizens and militia in chase of the invaders; and in attempting to continue his march in the dark, he fell into an ambush at midnight on the 3rd, and was shot down with some of his men, the rest surrendering. That his body was stripped and plundered, and a ring cut from his hand, was but natural under the circumstances, and no uncommon fate in war: but it is to be regretted that some orders found upon his person, directing his men "to exhort the released prisoners to destroy and burn the hateful city, and not allow the rebel leader Davis and his

traitorous crew to escape," should have been made the pretext for exposing his corpse to the common gaze as that of a murderer slain in the midst of his felon deed. His family deny* the authenticity of these documents; but their charge of forgery against the Richmond Government is scarcely supported by special evidence or general probability. However the exact truth may be, certain it is that the attempt on their capital envenomed to the utmost the feelings of the South: as the insult to the remains of the gallant dead, and the virulent assault on his memory made subsequently in the official report of the Confederate secretary for war, served to enhance the bitterness of the North against their former fellow

* Dahlgren's father, the admiral (though admitting indirectly the great danger to Richmond had the enterprise succeeded), has written eloquently and indignantly to assert the falsity of these alleged instructions. But it is to be observed that those published are in two parts. The first (an able and stirring order, written on the official printed paper of a cavalry division of Meade's army) bears complete internal evidence of its authenticity, and contains nothing unusual in war, or that could be objected to by the Confederates, *but the sentence above quoted.* It was brought to Richmond and circulated at the time of the death being reported; and if *not* in the author's handwriting (as his friends contend), it is only necessary to suppose that it was copied for him from his own original. The so-called "special instructions" added to it by the Richmond journals, and containing lengthy directions for the pillage of their city, are, on the face of them, as clumsy a forgery as was ever perpetrated, and an evident afterthought of some imaginative Southerner.

States. Woe to the distracted country the hopes of whose bravest youth lead to such fierce purpose and such bloody end as Ulric Dahlgren's! What freedom, what greatness, can close the wounds made in the heart of an empire by a thousand lives and deaths like his?

An immediate and striking effect of the alarm that had been caused at Richmond, was the appointment of General Bragg—unemployed since his Chattanooga disaster—to the nominal chief command of the Confederate armies. His real power was understood to be exercised mainly over the troops in the vicinity of the capital, with the defence of which he was specially charged. As regarded the forces in the field, his sole concern with them was as the organ and adviser of the President in his communications with their generals. His well-known character as the strictest disciplinarian in the service, and as a chief unmoved by private feelings, pointed him out to be well suited for his possible duties, should sudden danger call for some strong hand to control and lead the half-trained defenders of the capital: and despite his personal unpopularity, his appointment was hailed as a wise measure by the citizens.

But his powers were not to be called into requi-

sition, for with Kilpatrick's fruitless expedition ended the operations of the spring. The two months' pause that followed brought mighty changes, and promised a new destiny to the army of the Potomac. Grant—who for the capture of Vicksburg had received his brevet of major-general in the regular forces, the highest reward then in the power of the President—was elevated early in March to the rank of lieutenant-general, by virtue of a special Act of Congress; and having received his new commission at Washington on the 9th, was on the 18th endowed with the office of General-in-Chief of the Northern armies, his predecessor, Halleck, becoming his chief of staff. He at once announced his intention of taking personal control of the forthcoming campaign against Richmond; and having left Chattanooga and the vast interests in that quarter to the care of his immediate successor, Sherman, removed his head-quarters to those of Meade, and devoted himself thenceforward to re-organizing the army of the latter thoroughly for its new campaign. With such preparations he was occupied when the anniversary of the fatal day of Fort Sumter's fall * came round, and a new period

* The 13th April, 1861, is the exact day of the surrender of Fort Sumter by Anderson. But the 12th being the beginning of the bombardment, is universally accepted as the date from which the war began.

of the war began. With these we are therefore here not specially concerned. Under his care the army of the Potomac grew daily in strength and discipline. On the other side, all intention of retaining Longstreet on the Tennessee frontier had been abandoned at Richmond before this time, as already noticed, and his corps—withdrawn from before Knoxville at the end of February—were supplied with due necessaries after their mountain campaign, and moved northward to resume their old place under Lee, who would need them, every man, to meet the coming shock.

So closed an eventful year for the Army of Virginia. Within that time it had done and suffered much. In its annals for 1863 are inscribed a victory which may rank with Napoleon's highest achievements, and a defeat which threatened for a time consequences as momentous as those which flowed from Waterloo. Yet its soldiers might safely boast that their enemy had seen them beaten, but not routed; retreating, yet never in flight. They could point with pride to the river in their front which the foe had never crossed but to retire, and to the noble chief who stood ready with them to guard their capital through the coming year. Well that they had confidence in him! Taught by the sharp

lessons of experience, the Federal Government was learning to discard from the weightier posts of its armies the shallow braggarts and intriguing politicians who once had claimed them, and to place in their stead men of stern valour and proved sagacity. More vast than any of those which had gone before was to be the invasion of the spring. More fierce than the most desperate encounters the war had seen, was that which awaited them still, when their new foe should launch his host against the heroic defenders of the yet unconquered State.

London: Printed by SMITH, ELDER AND Co., Old Bailey, E.C.

Digitized with financial assistance from
Shri Brihad Bhartiya Samaj
on 31 October, 2019